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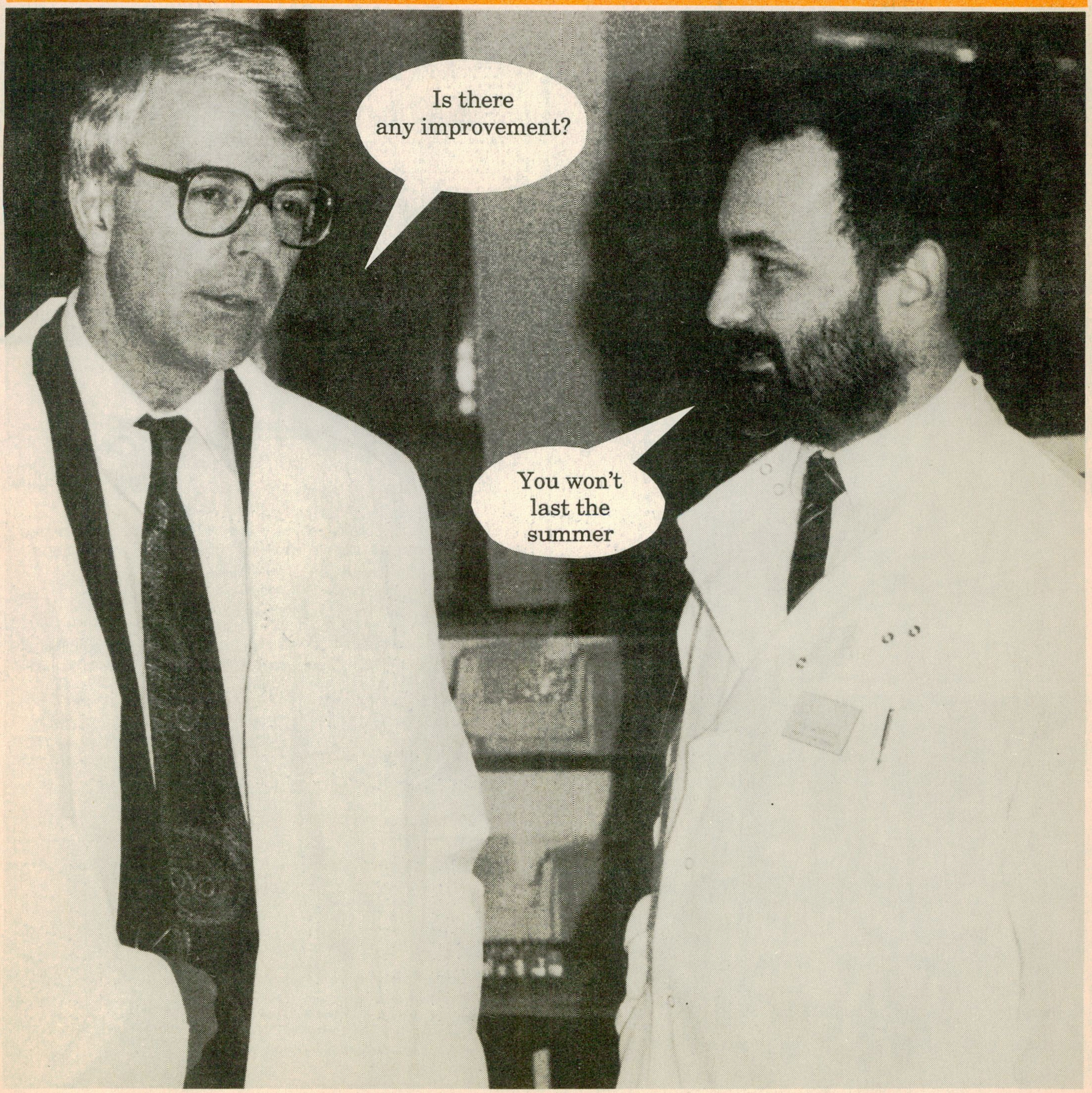

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MAXWELL IS ALIVE
FAT MILLIONAIRE PENSIONS TYCOON FAKED HIS DEATH
By MARK CHRISTIAN ANDERSON
MEGA EXCLUSIVE
Robert Maxwell, the man who made millions from his pensions empire, is alive and living a new life in Japan as a Sumo Wrestler.
The amazing claims were made by amateur radio ham Alfred Windbottom who says he found out about Maxwells brilliant deception whilst listening in on the airwaves with his portable satellite snooping device.
Windbottom claims he was scouring the airwaves hoping to pick up on a saucy Royal telephone conversation, when he accidentally tapped into a conversation between Maxwell and his trainer Yakashuzi Kawasaki.
According to Alfred, Maxwell, now known as the 'Great White Whale', was organising travel arrangements for a tournament. "As soon as I heard that voice I knew it was Maxwell", said Windbottom. "Even though he was speaking in Japanese!"
MAXWELL: The Great White Whale
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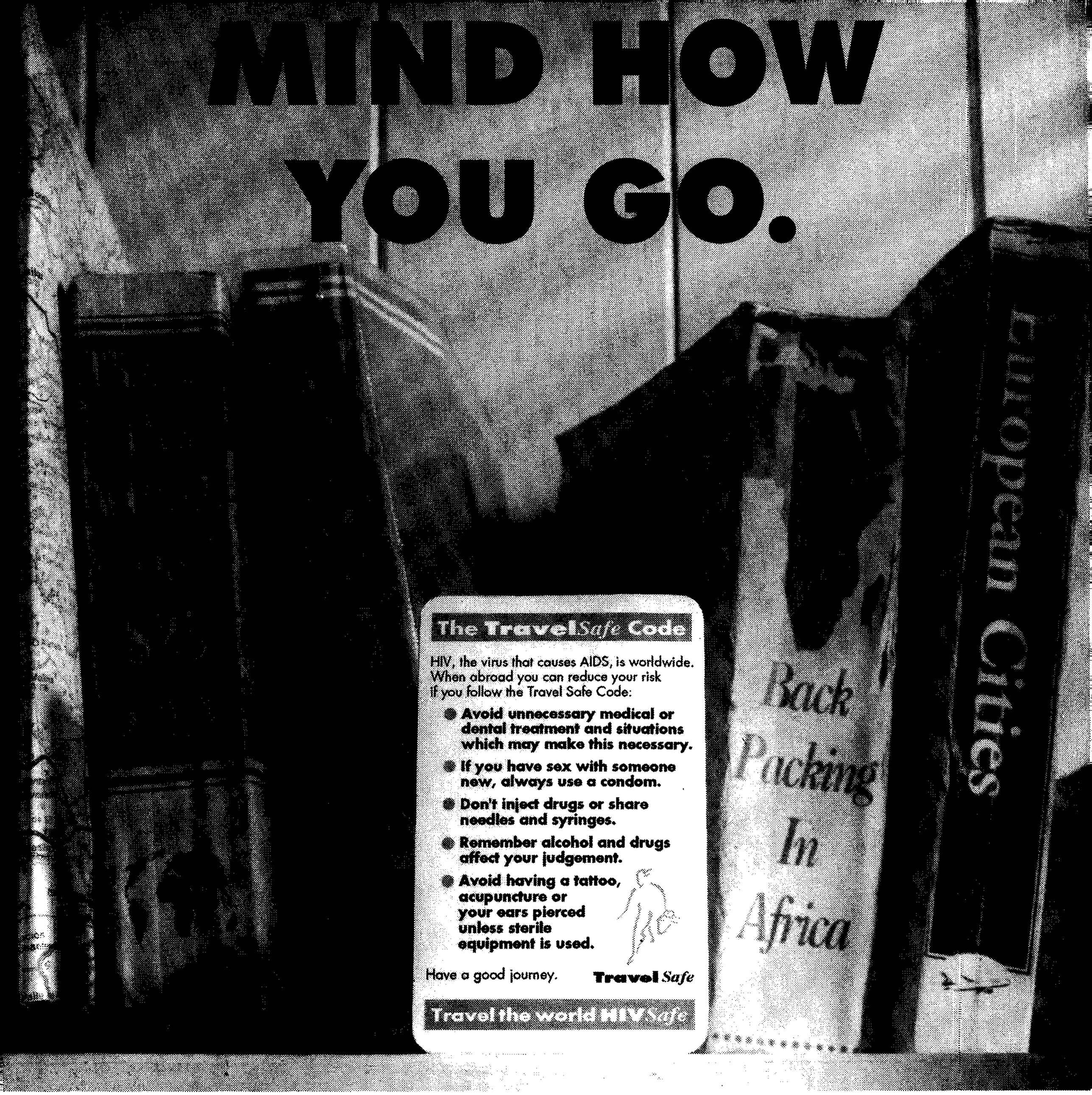
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Issued by the Department of Health.

Gnome

I AM sorry to see that a group of malcontents are still unhappy about the decision of "Gnome's of London", the highly prestigious insurance concern, to deprive them of all their assets.

These so-called "Gnomes" were well aware, when they joined, of all the risks involved. Mr Emmanuel Strobes set it all out with his customary skill in his pamphlet "Investing in Gnomes: You can be a millionaire with no risk whatever to your personal future".

It is again being claimed that "insiders" (ie myself and Mr Strobes) made sure that we were not ourselves liable.

This is quite untrue. I, too, may well be forced to sell my house if I am sacked as a result of the continuing protest.

E Strobes
pp Lord Gnome
Nadiropolis
N. Cyprus

World Population Explosion

To Ian and Victoria Hislop, a son, William David, on 26 June. A brother for Emily.

Those donations! Lord Gnome exposed — see page 3.

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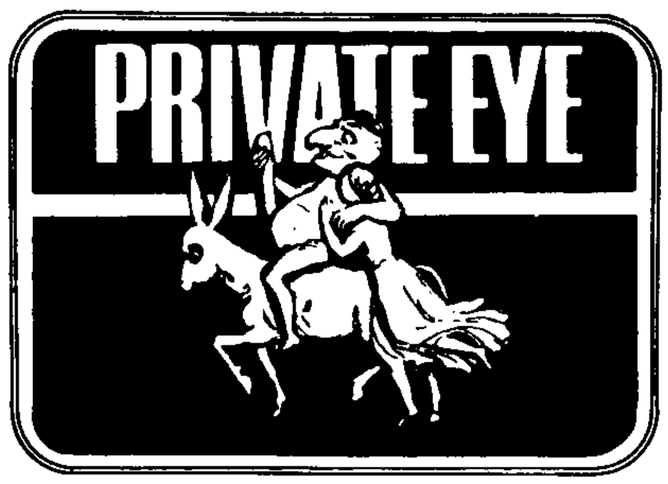


COLOUR SECTION

THE WRETCHED Michael Mates makes much of an alleged plot by the intelligence services to destabilise him because they want to destabilise Northern Cyprus.

But as Mates should know from his days in the British army before he left so suddenly to become an MP, the intelligence services are, in general, 100 per cent in favour of Northern Cyprus. It affords endless BCCI-style opportunities for the import and export of "difficult" goods, including arms.

For the real culprits in his downfall, Mates need look no further than his own party in the House of Commons, many of whose members will never forget his role in the demise of their heroine, Margaret Thatcher.

The Alan Clarke diaries tell the remarkable story of the plot to ruin Mates last time — by leaking to Labour MP Tam Dalyell Mates's connections with the defence industry when he was chairman of the House of Commons defence select committee. Dalyell has confirmed the approach — from the chief anti-Mates conspirator, Jonathan Aitken, the debonair former young meteor and MP for Thanet.

Aitken has always boasted that he is at heart a reformer, a champion of freedom of information and an enemy of the hard right. His role in the Mates affair gives the lie to that image. It is all the more remarkable in view of Aitken's current position as minister for defence procurement, responsible for Britain's only really effective and profitable export — the weapons of mass destruction.

No one is better placed to do this job than Aitken, who keeps up his long and loving relationship with the kings and princes of Saudi Arabia. Aitken is also a former director of a now bust arms company called BMARC, which sold arms (via Jordan, Singapore and other places) to Iran and Iraq while the then British government pretended it had imposed an arms embargo on both countries.

Will Aitken give evidence at the Scott inquiry into the illegal supply of British arms to Iraq? He is eminently qualified to do so. But the inquiry seems reluctant to face the public controversy which the evidence of Aitken might stir up.

Recent articles in the *Eye* and the *New Statesman* suggesting that the Scott inquiry might be soft on the government and on the intelligence services produced an angry reply. In an "off-the-record" briefing to journalists, Mr Christopher Muttukamara, who has been seconded from the treasury solicitor's office to the Scott inquiry, pleaded that the evidence so far heard was only the "tip of the iceberg" of what had been collected by way of secret and classified documents. His suggestion was that much more explosive material will emerge from the inquiry. Maybe. The hearings so far have been tame.

They need spicing up with outspoken witnesses such as the Bristol engineer and former right-hand man of arms manufacturer Gerald Bull, Christopher Cowley. It is not yet clear whether Cowley will appear at the inquiry. Another outspoken critic is Gerald James, former chairman of the Astra arms company. So worried have the authorities become by Mr James's consistent sniping about what he says was a conspiracy to ruin his company that they have financed a department of trade inquiry into Astra, to the tune of £2 million. The report is by barrister Colin Rimer, who was at school with the man who appointed him, Peter Lilley, and accountant David White. Most of the report is taken up with minor accounting criticisms of the company and Gerald James. Its attitude to matters controversial is well summarised in an early paragraph, 1.11.

"The views volunteered to us by Mr James covered a wide range of subjects, certain of which apparently had little or no connection with Astra, and included allegations involving senior UK politicians and civil servants and allegations of illegal arms deals involving foreign governments and government agencies and the security services of the UK and other countries. Whilst Mr James impressed on us his own view that we ought to investigate and report on these allegations, we concluded that to do so would have involved inquiries which went beyond what we regarded as the boundaries of our role as inspectors appointed under the Companies Act 1985 to investigate the affairs of ASTRA. We accordingly concluded that it was inappropriate for us to embark on an investigation into these allegations."

The vast report makes no mention of the following four important people:

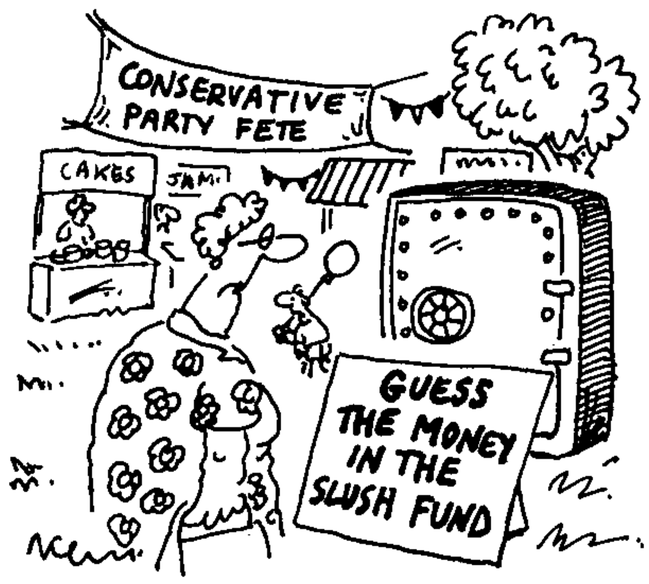
- Richard Unwin, director of an arms company bought by Astra which was very active in the controversial arms-for-aid deal with Malaysia, signed by Mrs Thatcher in 1985.
- Gerald Howarth, a director of Unwin, right-wing Tory MP and, later, adviser and assistant to Mrs Thatcher.
- Wafic Said, the Syrian multi-millionaire, who facilitated the notorious Al Yamamah arms deal with Saudi Arabia, first signed by Mrs Thatcher in 1985. Said's company SIFCORP was involved with Astra in its purchase of the Belgian arms company PRB, but even the company gets only a small mention in the Rimer report (par 7/189).
- Jonathan Aitken, whose firm BMARC was a subsidiary of ASTRA.

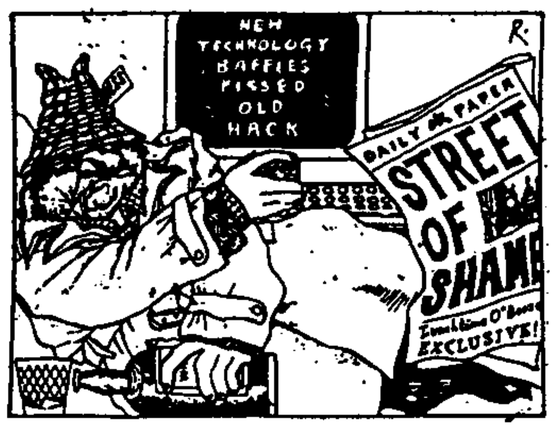
It can only be hoped that lord justice Scott will hear from all four people, especially the minister for arms procurement.

FOR 18 MONTHS, while publicly saying the opposite, British and French diplomats have been muttering over briefing lunches: "Of course some form of cantonisation of Bosnia is inevitable."

Their behaviour has been compared with that of Neville Chamberlain in Munich in 1938, but that is unfair on Chamberlain. He never enforced what is effectively a one-sided arms embargo on the Czechs, which is what London and Paris have done in Bosnia.

While the foreign ministers of Europe give the same advice to the Bosnians as Confucius was alleged to have given to someone about to be raped — "Lie back and relax and they won't hurt you" — Major General Lewis Mackenzie of the Canadian army was way ahead of the curve. While commander of the UN forces in Bosnia, his partiality towards the Serbs was noted by the locals. Now he has confirmed their suspicions by admitting that he accepted $15,000 plus expenses to give the Serb point of view in Washington.





EARLIER this month the *Sunday Times* ran an extremely flattering interview with Dame Shirley Porter, presenting her as an honest, forthright, fighting public figure.

A number of readers wrote letters to the editor raising various points which were somehow overlooked in the article — such as the dame's refusal to hold an inquiry into the sale of three cemeteries for 15 pence, and the manipulation of council-house sales to the benefit of likely Tory voters. Oddly, none of these letters has been published.

By a strange coincidence, *Sunset Times* editor Andrew Neil is a highly-paid presenter on the radio station LBC. And who owns LBC? Why, Dame Shirley Porter.

EXECUTIVES at the *Sun* are crowing about having recruited Mike Parry, formerly the *Daily Express*'s assistant editor in the United States (*Eye* 821). They are certainly lucky to have secured the services of such a talented truth-seeker.

Parry's finest hour at the *Express* was in August 1981 when he wrote a huge story headed "Ripper Film Role for de Niro?" "A Hollywood film agent said last night that Robert de Niro was to be offered the part of Yorkshire Ripper Peter Sutcliffe in a planned major film," Parry revealed. "Sutcliffe's wife, Sonia, has been offered the job as adviser on the film."

Who was the source for this implausible yarn? Step forward "show business agent Michael 'Rocky' Ryan" — aka the notorious Neasden-based newspaper hoaxer.

Twelve years on, Rocky is still up to his old tricks. His latest wheeze is to double-bluff by claiming the credit for hoaxes that aren't his. Last week he rang the *Guardian* Diary to boast that he was the source for a *Sun* story about staff at Buckingham Palace and the gay serial killer. The *Guardian* duly "revealed" his authorship — whereupon a delighted Ryan rang *Sun* news editor Jamie Pyatt to admit that he hadn't been the source of the original story at all.

Still, now that Parry is installed at Wapping the tiresome Ryan can look forward to planting plenty of genuine hoaxes in the *Sun*.

***SUNDAY TIMES* political editor Michael Jones was mightily impressed by the Opsahl report, a tedious attempt to come up with a solution to the Troubles which will enable the more affluent residents of Northern Ireland to hold dinner parties without fear of disruption by the rabble.**

Jones hailed the report, which bases its recommendations on the power-sharing theories of one John Calhoun, as a "landmark... (it)... points the way forward" for John Major and Albert Reynolds.

This view is unlikely to gain much ground in Ulster, despite the efforts of Andy Pollak, an *Irish Times* hack who dreamed the whole exercise up while on sabbatical, to drum up support from colleagues near and far (the *Guardian*, *Observer* etc).

One newspaper in particular tore the document to shreds, attacking it as "potty, unworkable, poorly researched, lack lustre, banal and confused". It also revealed that the mysterious Calhoun was "a South Carolina racist, a fanatical advocate of black slavery and the secession of the southern states. The alliance he sought was between Dixieland slave owners and northern industrialists, whose workers he regarded as wage slaves just as the blacks were chattel slaves. He saw slavery as the only framework in which the races could co-exist."

This devastating indictment appeared, funnily enough, in an op-ed in the Irish edition of the *Sunday Times*. Perhaps they just don't bother reading that in Wapping.

IMPOVERISHED freelances beside themselves with rage at the *Daily Mirror*'s new charges for sending in copy electronically might be interested in the news that on 27 May three directors of Mirror Group Newspapers, Charles "Gorbals" Wilson, Roger Eastoe and Endell Laird, helped themselves to an extra 37,344 shares each.

The shares were entirely free. If sold at the current price, they would bring the three directors a cool £60,000 each.

GERALD MALONE, the Tory vice-chairman in charge of candidates, is the MP who replaced John Browne in Winchester and who "minded" the lacklustre contender in the disastrous Newbury by-election.

Nor is his career as a "journalist" any more encouraging. After he lost his Aberdeen South seat in the 1987 general election, Malone started writing the odd piece for the *Sunday Times*, which happens to be edited by his old Glasgow university chum, Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill (with whom he shares a flat in London).

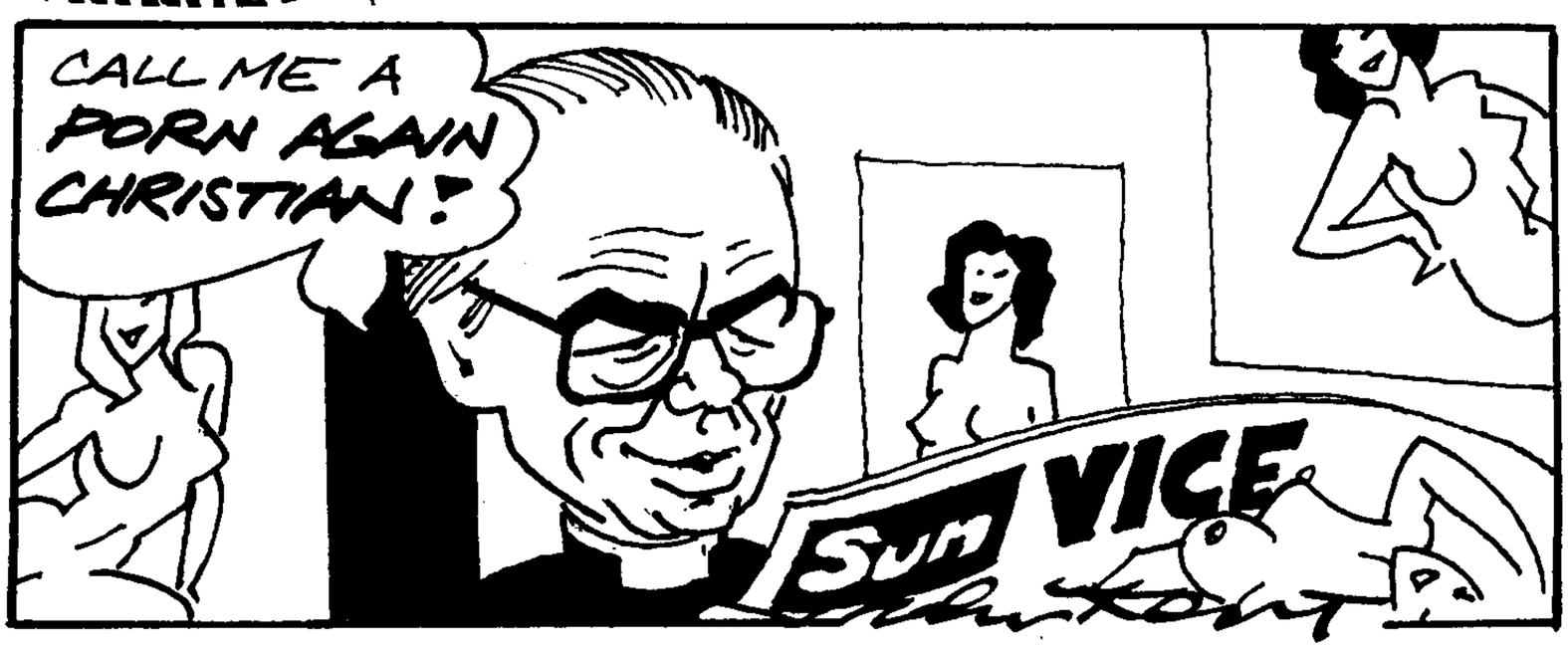
When News International launched Scottish editions of both the *Sun* and the *Sunday Times*, Malone was made the editor of the *Sunday Times* Scottish operation with Jim Neill (Brillo's ex-newsagent brother) running the business side of things.

The Scottish edition of the *Sunday Times* was a failure, and Jack Irvine, News International Scotland's md, recommended that Malone should be eased out of his job as editor. Thereafter, Irvine and others in News International's Glasgow HQ assumed that, apart from contributing occasional articles, Malone was no longer involved. Their jaws dropped when they read in a recent edition of *Scotland on Sunday* that Malone is still the "executive editor" of the *Sunday Times* Scottish edition and is interviewing candidates to succeed the current editor. "What kind of prats are they going to end up with?" asked one insider forlornly.

QUESTION TIME

WHO IS the former Tory MP who has put in a generous bid for the *New Statesman*? Why has he done it? Has the bid got anything to do with the pending libel action from the prime minister?

We think we should be told.



WORLD OF HYPE

THE TRAVEL trade is mystified by the appointment of PR operative Adele Biss as chairperson of the British Tourist Authority.

Biss is a relic of the Thatcher age if ever there was one, selling her business at the top of the market in 1987 for about four times what it would be worth today.

Her predecessor, Herr Wilhelm Davis, lasted only one term as BTA chairman and left in much dudgeon early this year, without the usual K. He was a Thatcher speechwriter, and he sold his publishing business (to Maxwell) for about £6 million.

Biss's only previous quango was BR, where she was, equally mysteriously, made a part-time member of the board in 1987. She lasted long enough to qualify for free rail travel for life, but made little impact, being prevented by a conflict of interest from taking part in discussions on marketing policy. (She was a director of Wight Collins Rutherford Scott, which was in competition with BR's existing advertising agencies for BR's lucrative accounts.)

POLICE 5

ALISON HALFORD'S claim that she paraded topless before a Metropolitan police interview board was so bizarre it had to be true.

The alleged incident is said to have happened in the sixties, when Halford first joined the force. It is being strongly denied by the Met, but the denials are being issued by career policewomen who weren't around 30 years ago when such practices were allegedly rife.

Halford's revelation in her book *No Way Up The Greasy Pole* has been backed by two other women who joined the Met at around about the same time. One former WPO, now retired and living in Surrey, sent Halford the following saga:

"Part of my selection interview for the Metropolitan police (1962) consisted of an examination by three uniformed police officers. I was told to remove all of my clothes, except my pants, and to put on a robe. I then entered a room (as I remember it looked like an ordinary office) in which two males and one female, all in police uniform, were seated behind a large desk.

"I was told to remove my robe and to stand facing them. One of the officers told me to put my hands by my sides and show my palms, then turn my hands over. I was told to turn my back towards them and bend over (my bottom would then be facing them). The 'examination' took several minutes. I don't remember being asked any medical (or indeed any other) questions.

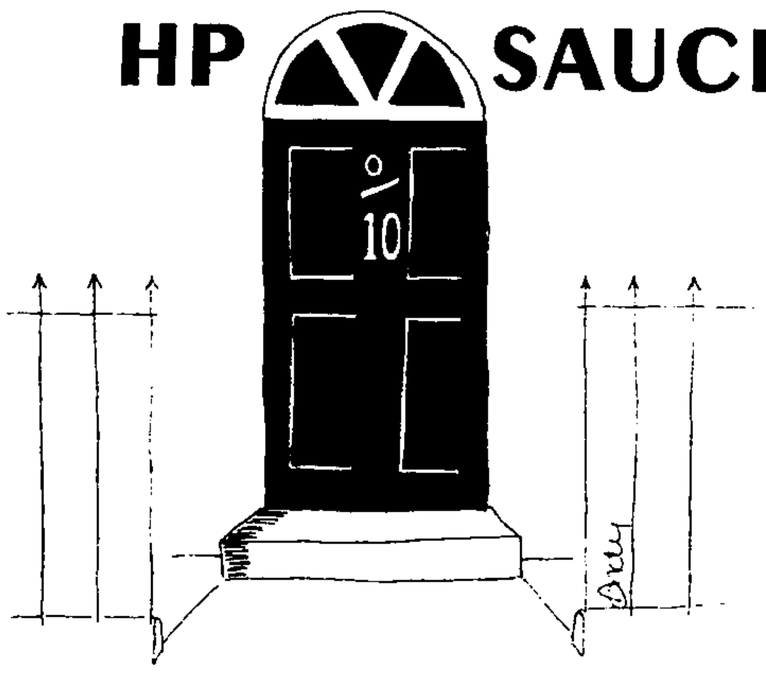
"I remember being initially quite embarrassed by this examination, but it was a case of telling myself, 'You want to join the police force, this is part of the selection procedure...' "

As with Halford's claim, this corroboration suggests none of the trio physically examining women recruits were medical personnel or identified themselves as such. These strange goings-on were perhaps a cross-over from perverse breast-baring Masonic rituals historically so popular with the Met's top brass.

Meanwhile, Halford continues to be punished for blowing the whistle on Murkeyside's neanderthal police culture. She has been blacklisted from the Merseyside police club, the president of which is none other than chief constable Jim Sharples. As the po-faced statement put out by "Sunny" Jim's cronies says: "As a number of existing members of the Mess (sic) have been subject to unworthy and public comment by Miss Halford, it would be inappropriate for her to be a member."

Since the Mess uses public property for its frequent drunken beanfeasts, it is probably also inappropriate for the taxpayer to continue funding it, if its officials behave in such a churlish, mean-spirited manner to former colleagues.

HP SAUCE



IN THE spring of 1990, Labour MP Tam Dalyell alleged in a Commons question that Charles Powell, Mrs Thatcher's foreign affairs adviser, has abused his civil service non-political status.

He said Powell had attended a dinner which was designed to persuade Conrad Black, owner of the *Daily Torygraph*, to stop promoting Michael Heseltine and show greater support for the beleaguered Leaderene. Other Thatcherites present included Alan Clark MP, Sir James Goldsmith and zookeeper John Aspinall.

The allegation was met with outraged denials. "The circumstances are not as you describe them and the issues in your question do not arise," Thatcher told Dalyell. "The way in which you attempt to vilify individual civil servants is deplorable." Conrad Black himself insisted that "there is no substance in Mr Dalyell's allegations, which are an outrageous slur on Mr Charles Powell." The *Sunday Torygraph* was assured by the guests that "it was a dinner party held for no specific purpose other than social". Clark claimed that "we mainly talked about animals".

Now Alan Clark has published his diaries, and on page 284 there is an account of this selfsame dinner. "The guest was Conrad Black," Clark writes. "The purpose was to see to what extent he was amenable to being leant on, in the gentlest manner of course, to steer Max Hastings away from plugging Heseltine so much... The subject had to be approached delicately. Charles [Powell] was diplomatic, Jim [Goldsmith] blunt. But Black couldn't care."

Perhaps Tam Dalyell should ask for an apology.

THE TORIES' skill at taking money from businessmen who are not totally unacquainted with controversy knows no bounds.

In Manchester, Britain's Olympic city, the coffers of the local Conservative "action committee", CMAC, have been swelled by a £90,000 donation from Muhammed Navid, proprietor of the Arrows company.

Unfortunately, Mr Navid currently faces 20 fraud charges involving amounts from £300,000 to more than £1 million, and will appear before m'learned friends at the Old Bailey next January.

Coincidentally, the Manchester Tories have just decided to close down CMAC and move Central Manchester financial organiser Reg Harraden out of politics altogether. Harraden was brought into run CMAC in 1988, and charged with improving the Manchester party's diminishing presence on the local Labour-run council.

When Harraden started there were 13 Tory councillors in Manchester; there are now five, and the Liberals have replaced the Conservatives as the official council opposition.

THE impending vacancy at Walworth Road as Larry Whitty departs as general-secretary of the Labour party gives John Smith fresh encouragement in his battle to wrest control of the party from its trade union paymasters.

Smith has found the perfect candidate for a job which, pre-Whitty, was of prime importance in what remains of the Labour Movement. Not only is the candidate a close friend and Smith supporter, but he also happens to be a top trade unionist. Step forward Gavin Laird, general-secretary of the AEU.

GEOFFREY ROBINSON, Labour's richest MP, is about to lose his seat in the boundary changes.

Boundary commissioners want to cut Coventry's entitlement from four seats to three, with Robinson's Coventry North-West disappearing in the process.

But the dashing, 55-year-old champagne socialist, a former chief executive of Jaguar cars who had the misfortune of going to school with *Sun* editor Kelvin Mackenzie, is determined to fight local Tory John Butcher for the right to represent the new seat of Coventry West at the next election.

Why is Robinson so eager to stay in Parliament? A few years ago he went for 12 months without making a single speech in the Commons, and his recent voting record earned him 574th place in a league table of MPs.

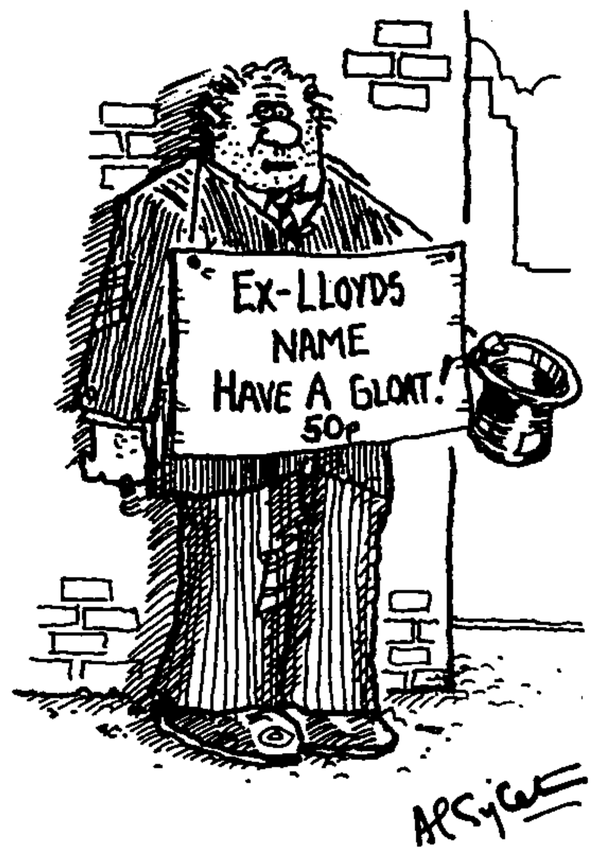
Does he need his £30,000-plus backbencher's salary? As chairman of the manufacturing firm Transfer Technology (recently ranked as the UK's 43rd best performer) he earns around £150,000 a year. The company has an annual turnover of around £100 million and he himself has pocketed around £1 million from recent deals.

Soon he will be able to pay off both Labour's and the Tories' overdrafts.

SALLY MORGAN, Labour's new campaigns and elections supremo who was recently described in a *Grauniad* profile as a 32-year-old campaigning whizzkid, got her job despite intense opposition from Labour's deputy leader Margaret Beckett.

The favourite for the job was another former student politico and long-standing ally of Ms Morgan, the GMB's Phil Woolas, who once applied for the job of director of communications at Walworth Road. Following the debacle of the 1992 general election, Woolas switched his allegiance from Kinnock to GMB-sponsored John Smith. However, he forgot to mention that he was applying for the campaigns and elections job to his boss at the GMB, John Edmonds. Ms Morgan lobbied for the support of T&G boss Bill Morris, while Edmonds was tipped off (by whom, Backbiter wonders?) about Woolas's application. Edmonds angrily told him to withdraw his name and concentrate on work at the GMB.

What is the reason for the mutual antipathy between Beckett and Morgan? It dates back to Beckett's "Judas" jibe against Kinnochio in 1981 (after he abstained in the vote for the deputy leadership between Benn and Healey). Apparently Ms Morgan never forgave La Beckett for her vilification of Kinnochio — hence her vigorous campaign against Beckett in last year's deputy leadership contest.



ONE thing missing from the analysis of Tory party funding methods is the use of what the intelligence services call "cut-outs".

Throughout the 1980s, some Tory donors became scared of identification even through the most traditional avenue for the wilfully anonymous — offshore accounts. Authorities in such convenient offshore banking centres as the British colonies of the Caymans, Virgin Islands or closer to home Jersey and the Isle of Man, have had to sacrifice much of their treasured commitment to non-identification and disclosure over the last 13 years as a result of the West's phoney war on drug money laundering.

Enter such front organisations as British United Industrialists and Aims of Industry. For a small handling fee plus VAT, they would hand on your donation, disguised as their own, to Lord McAlpine at Tory central office. The advantage of such a precaution was made clear by British United Industrialists' director-general Alastair Forbes in an appeal to one key donor in the run up to the 1987 election:

"We believe that a donation to BUI is less emotive than a donation to the Conservative party. Large donations from public companies must go through their boards for approval. Even private companies, depending on their share structuring may find it necessary to seek board approval. Donations through us are, however, not deemed to be political donations and a single telephone call from me will trigger an invoice plus VAT on which a payment can be made."

THE FACT that neither the *Guardian* nor Clive Soley can stand up their allegations about Saudi Arabian money for the Tory coffers should not stop inquiries in that area.

A good start could be made by publishing the national audit office report into the Al Yamamah arms deal with the Saudis.

The report was suppressed last year by the chairman of the Commons public accounts committee, Bob Sheldon. No reason, save the possible loss of British jobs, was given for this blatant censorship.

The real reason was that the report details the monstrous commissions paid to individuals as a result of the contract — commissions which would, of course, be imperilled by any change of government in Britain.

'Backbiter'

MPs FOR HIRE

ONE method MPs use to avoid disclosing the identity of their paymasters is to work for public relations and/or political lobbying companies.

Under the rules, MPs should declare the clients of the firm that hires them — but few of them do so. In part eight of our series, we look at MPs in the pay of the PR firms:

John Carlisle *Luton North*: Consultant to Barry Simmons PR Ltd.

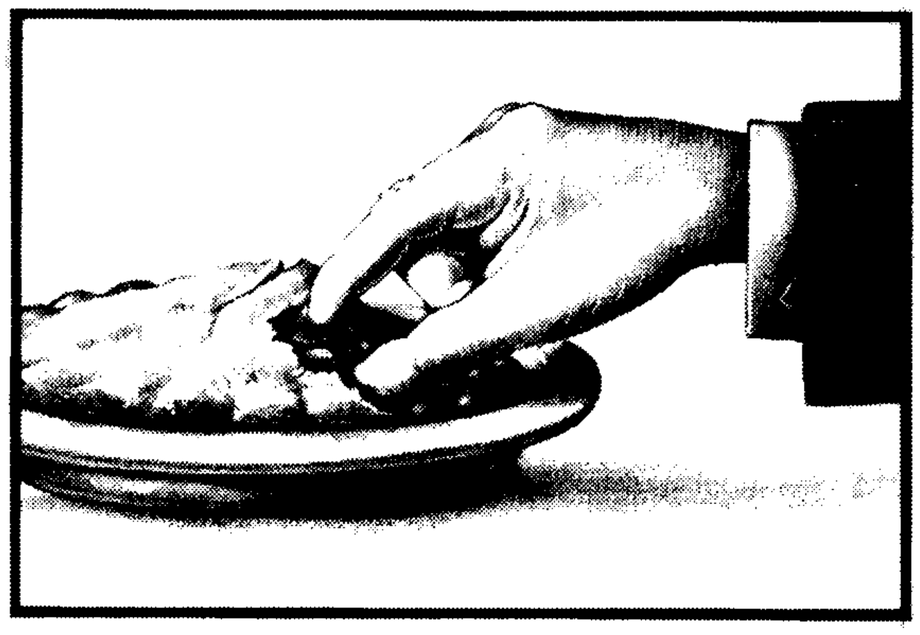
Sir Anthony Durant *Reading West*: Adviser to Shire Hall Communications.

Sir Geoffrey Johnson-Smith *Wealden*: Director of Taylor Alden Ltd.

Gerald Malone *Winchester*: Until very recently a consultant to Morgan and Rogerson Ltd, purveyors of fine public relations advice to Mr Asil Nadir.

Sir Fergus Montgomery *Altrincham and Sale*: Consultant to Welbeck PR Ltd.

Gordon Oakes *Halton*: Public affairs consultant to 3M UK Ltd.



Anthony Steen *South Hams*: Consultant to The Communication Group plc.

Peter Temple-Morris *Leominster* Director of J.K. Associates (PR) Ltd.

Paul Tyler *North Cornwall*: Managing director and shareholder of Western Approaches PR Ltd.

● *Next issue: Political and parliamentary lobbying companies.*

Grovel

VERNON MWAANGA, the Zambian foreign minister, was passing through London recently on his way back from a meeting with President Clinton. Staying at the St James Court Hotel in Victoria, he was awoken at 8.30am by a telephone call from an irate Tiny Rowland.

Mwaanga is a distinguished figure in African political circles. He was Kenneth Kaunda's foreign minister during the 1970s, then fell out with him and joined the democratic opposition. After Kaunda was defeated in elections in 1991 Mwaanga was again made foreign minister. He has also served on the secretariat of the Organisation for African Unity.

Once he had got through, Rowland lambasted Mwaanga for the next half hour, accusing him of destroying Lonrho in Africa by telling tales to Rowland's unofficial biographer, Tom Bower, and by appearing in Bower's BBC documentary about Rowland. In particular, he asked Mwaanga why he had told an anecdote about a airplane flight above Africa during which Tiny had allegedly said to him that he could buy all the countries below. "Because it's true, Tiny," Mwaanga explained.

He further explained that one reason he had been prepared to co-operate with Bower was that in 1991 Tiny had given an interview to a Nairobi magazine in which he had pledged support for Kaunda and dismissed the democratic opposition, describing Mwaanga as a non-entity. Rowland denied that he had even given such an interview, to which Mwaanga replied: "Tiny, either you are a liar or you are senile." Mwaanga has since had several pirate videos made of the Bower documentary and is sending them to friends and colleagues around Africa.

"Lie back and try not to think of England"

I LEARN that the recent fuss about John Selwyn Gummer's garden pond is not the first time that our much-loved environment secretary has had trouble with waterworks.

Back in the late 1960s, when he was a mere slip of a lad, young Gum-Gum was a trouble-shooter for the publishers BPC, in which capacity he was brought in to sort out the bibulous staff at one of its subsidiaries, Purnell. One afternoon, after their customary four-hour lunch, two Purnell employees were enjoying much-needed post-prandial relief in the office urinal when Gummer stormed in. "What time do you call this?" he demanded, tapping his watch.

Surprised by the intrusion, one of the men, Germano Facetti, turned from the urinal — before realising that he had somehow failed to complete his micturition. With anguished cries of "mi scusi, Signor Gummer!" the Italian book designer hosed him up and down, soaking the future secretary of state to the skin.

Facetti and his colleague, Bobby Hunt, were naturally distressed to see a senior executive in such a condition. So, despite his protests, they helped him off with his trousers and left them to soak in the hand basin. Gummer must have been overcome by this act of kindness: he was in tears when the two men left him behind in the gents.

I HEAR that Nick Rosen, freelance TV producer and Cap'n Bob's nephew, has been seeking to ingratiate himself with Elizabeth Crompton-Batt, compiler of the Martin Miller guide to the 500 most eligible men in Britain.

First he sent her a fax in which he introduced himself and suggested he should be included in the forthcoming tome — not, you understand, for himself, but because he has been spending rather a lot of time in New York and doesn't want to be forgotten back here in London.

Crompton-Batt agreed to consider his submitted cv with accompanying photograph, but was a little taken aback when he rang back with some more piquant information.

"Perhaps you might like to know that I went out for several years with Katherine Hamnett," Rosen proudly announced, as if the raddled 80s T-shirt designer were some amazingly glamorous trophy. "And do you know what she used to say about me?" he continued. "I'm not telling you this, but others have told me that when asked why she slept with me, she would say that I was the best lay in London. Actually, she said I was the best *fuck* — but I don't suppose you can use that word in your publication."

TO EMBARGO, a King's Road nightspot, where teenagers go to meet members of the opposite sex for purposes I can only guess at.

I enjoy myself immensely on the dancefloor until I am unceremoniously bumped by two elderly men who occasion sniggers from the youthful onlookers as they strut what they no doubt fondly imagine to be their "funky stuff".

The identity of these ageing lotharios? None other than "Bungalow" Bill Wiggins, former consort of Miss Joan Collins, and Mr Andrew Neill, the fun-loving editor of the *Sunset Times*.

● *WHILE ON the subject of "Brillo Pad", I am told that he has recently bought a small chateau in Provence. "It was built at the time of the French Revolution," the scourge of the British monarchy has been boasting to acquaintances.*

Pip Pip!

Pseuds Corner

Literary success and failure, the maul of ambition and arrest, motive and struggle — this is the busy paradise, the desperate garden of letters that draws Cynthia Ozick. She stands at its entrance with a stony ledger and in a rapture of judgement, severely admitting and excluding.

JAMES WOOD
Guardian

Years later, after childbearing had intervened, in Drawing on a Mother's Experience, she [Bobby Baker] poured treacle (to represent post-natal depression) and skimmed milk (to represent her problems with breast-feeding) on to a white sheet. The drawing, with carefully chosen "paints" — egg yolk, blackberries, yoghurt, Guinness — was as significant as the experience of the mess and mystery of motherhood that she was illustrating. In Cook Dems, Baker baked food for thought. People expecting a cookery demonstration took their notebooks. Baker enjoyed their disorientation as she prepared a pair of enormous dough antlers and attached them to her head with a ribbon. "Wear them to improve your status," she said. Her most recent piece, Kitchen Show, took place in her own kitchen. To each of the 25 members of the audience she offered a hot drink, milking, sugaring and stirring herself. It was the first of a "Baker's Dozen" of actions which she then marked with a physical reminder — in this case by bandaging the spoon to her hand.

Independent

I so seldom go to the cinema in London (as with art exhibitions, I prefer to see films abroad; in Paris, where, no matter how radical and arduous the film, I can be sure there's not a single spectator who doesn't know exactly what he's come to see; or else in New York, where I buy popcorn and Coke and endeavour, as a professional, an auteurist, some would say an elitist, to watch the film "like everyone else") that I've forgotten how grisly an experience it can be.

GILBERT ADAIR
Sunday Times

Mr Hamilton is married. His interests include book collecting, architecture, conservation, music, gardening and silence.

Press release on appointment of Neil Hamilton MP as Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Corporate Affairs at the DTI

I wonder if Carmen (Callil) still knits? I do not — and this is mysterious to me. Somehow the 1980s were not conducive to knitting. The soft Liberty colours did not go with the new decade. Now career women were everywhere, and bulky jackets replaced the 'period' jumpers, blouses and frocks.

My friend Mary once said that my handwriting was like knitting, all joined up in every direction. I wrote so much in the eighties; perhaps that was my knitting — a word misplaced, like a dropped stitch, and the whole thing can unravel, but when it goes right you feel pleased in much the same way.

Knitting had that extra something, though — a tangible object, a garment useful and beautiful. I would love the same to be said of my books — but are they warm and comforting too? I fear not. Knitting expressed a straightforward love of colour and pattern; for my books are reserved all the ambiguities of life.

ELIZABETH WILSON
A Virago Keepsake

Was Genet a pornographic writer? I would suggest that the difference between Genet and pornography is that, in his case, it's the text rather than the reader that ejaculates.

GILBERT ADAIR
Sunday Times

CONTRIBUTORS: Felix Taylor, David Milsted, R.P. Hurn, Philippa Crawford, E. Strobes, Peter Burgess.

£10 paid for entries

NOOKS and CORNERS

ALL SUMMER long, loud and hideously dressed people in cars packed with luggage and bearing GB plates will drive off the ferries in Ouistreham on the Normandy coast and belt south in pursuit of mindless sun worship or to spend a little time in their dream hovels in the Dordogne.

As always, they will rush through France without stopping; but this year they should pause, just a few miles south of the ferry before they reach the motorway at Caen, and take a last look at Pegasus Bridge. A last look because, after this summer, this curious, poignant British historical site will be spoiled in the cause of facilitating the ubiquitously ruthless road haulage industry.

For good reason, this column does not stray over the English Channel. Perhaps it should when British architects foul up nice places, as Sir Norman Foster has done in Nimes by replacing a neo-classical colonnade with one of his own tinny interventions right next to the Maison Carrée, that celebrated Roman temple. But Sir Norman is a genius, of course, the Vitruvius, the Mansart *de nos jours*, and, besides, it was the vapid, fashion-conscious mayor of Nimes who invited the English superstar in to do his worst, so perhaps we should not complain.

But Pegasus Bridge is different. It is a 1930s swing (or cantilevered) bridge over the wide canal from Caen to the sea. Next to it is an unremarkable and typical café of brick and render bearing a plaque which informs the visitor in two languages that it was "the first house in France to be liberated during the last hour of 5th June 1944 by men of the Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire Light Infantry in the British 6th Airborne Division..." Military historians may argue over whether the timing and date are correct, but

there is no doubt that this spot saw the first military action of D-Day.

As seen in *The Longest Day* in one of the few untarnished and unqualified acts of heroic daring in the second world war, British airborne troops in gliders captured and held on to this strategic bridge and so began the allied liberation of France.

Since that day, the Pegasus Bridge café — "English spoken" — has become a place of pilgrimage for veterans and a museum has been built next door. After the death of the proprietor, Georges Gondrée — who served champagne he had hidden in the garden to the British troops that fateful night — his three daughters quarrelled over the café's future, but in 1988 two of the sisters bought the café to preserve its character and role.

It is a charming, special and entertainingly unpretentious place, full of memorabilia and flags. A short walk away along the canal bank is the Chateau de Bénouville, an early work by the great Ledoux which served as a field hospital after D-Day and has now been beautifully restored. And there is the momentous bridge itself, which escaped serious damage and is in full working order. It is a most interesting thing.

The French authorities declared the café a *monument historique* in 1987. Other French authorities, however, have tried to sweep it away. For the bridge cannot carry the monster Eurojuggernauts which are smashing up towns and villages in the cause of Jacques Delors. So the bridge must be replaced by a stronger, larger one. Originally the approach to this would have required the removal of the café; then it was modified so that it came right up to the door, rendering it impossible to enter. But Madame Gondrée-Pritchett fought back, assisted by British veterans' organisations, and sensibly argued that if a new bridge were really necessary it could easily be built further north. Besides, most heavy traffic to Ouistreham does not use this minor road from the east.

The French authorities are not used to having their decisions challenged and reacted with fury. After all, there is not the tradition of conservation activism and the system of public inquiries such as we enjoy here: that is why the TGV lines generally get built with ease.

Besides, not everyone in France contemplates the significance of Pegasus Bridge with unalloyed joy, for not all regarded the allied invasion as "liberation" and, besides, Caen and many Normandy towns and villages were devastated after D-Day. So, finding that the opposition to its plans would not go away, the *département* countered by spitefully ordering the closure of the café for a time.

I dwell on all this because it is of peculiar British interest, but perhaps we in Britain have nothing to be smug about. For all our system of public consultation, our loathsome government is smashing a motorway across Twyford Down and is going to drive a new road across the battlefield of Naseby. The fact is that the principal enemy to civilisation in Britain, as in France, is the road engineer and his clients: the selfish, bloated, overweening, ruthless motor lobby that so handsomely supports our shiningly corrupt Conservative government.

Anyway, back in France, a sort of compromise has been reached. "I can no longer go against the will of the French government," says brave Mme Gondrée-Pritchett, but at least the present alignment of the road leaves her a bit of forecourt so the café can carry on. But the perfectly efficient and historically resonant bridge will be replaced this winter — for a few bigger lorries. So farewell then, Pegasus Bridge.

'Piloti'

RAIL NEWS

AS PREDICTED (*Eye* 818), the government has dissociated itself entirely from the huge redundancy programme at train builder ABB Transportation — formerly British Rail Engineering Ltd.

The department of transport attributed the 900 job losses to the recession. But as *Eye* well know, the redundancies stem directly from the government not allowing BR — a nationalised industry, remember — to invest in badly-needed new rolling stock, even though the financial case for it is robust.

Trafalgar House, one of the two private firms which bought BREL in 1989 (see *Eyes passim*) admitted when it sold its shares to ABB last year that BREL had been "a disappointing investment". Now ABB bosses are probably coming to the same conclusion. ABB Transportation chief executive Bo Södersten is said to be bitterly disappointed that his efforts to reverse the firm's fortunes since its disastrous sell-off have, essentially, come to naught.

What Bo Södersten and other ABB bigwigs failed to anticipate was the British government's outrageous apathy over UK manufacturing. For ABB is used to different treatment in its home country, Sweden: earlier this year the Swedish government gave financial support to 14 new tilt-body InterCity trains (costing £7.14 million each) — two years earlier than planned to prevent recession-related job losses at ABB's Swedish factories.

JOHN MACGREGOR isn't the only one to talk through his bottom about rail privatisation. Recent utterances by a transport department civil servant at the forefront of privatisation planning have humiliated the whole department.

Introducing the concept of the micro-franchise — the department's latest brilliant idea for butchering the rail network — the civil servant showed enthusiastically how the Blaenau Ffestiniog to Llandudno Junction branch line could operate without heavy subsidy. It required the burgeoning Ffestiniog Railway, which runs steam trains between Porthmadog and Blaenau Ffestiniog, to take over the BR branch line and run its steam trains on to Llandudno Junction.

Senior BR managers at the meeting were astonished at the civil servant's ignorance. It wasn't just that steam trains took 1hr 5mins to travel 13.5 miles (and would need more than two hours to travel the length of the BR line); or that a return trip over those 13.5 miles and back cost £11.40; or that the steam line relied heavily on volunteer labour to remain solvent; or that the only trains the Ffestiniog Railway runs in winter are Father Christmas Specials.

What appalled BR managers was that the civil servant had to be told the Ffestiniog was a *narrow gauge* railway, with just two ft between the rails, while the BR branch line, by contrast, was *standard gauge*, with nearly five ft between the rails.

Bankers

MORE ON the catatonic slowness with which banks credit customers' accounts.

Reader Stuart Neilson from Surrey deposited a pay cheque, drawn on a TSB account, into his own TSB account on a Friday morning but was told the money would not be available to him until the Thursday evening of the following week — a delay of nearly seven days. For an extra £15, he could have had the cheque express cleared by the Tuesday evening or perhaps the Wednesday.

All this rather irked Mr Neilson because the previous month he and his employer had both paid in TSB-drawn cheques. Mr Neilson had paid in his salary cheque and his employer had paid in a cheque from Mr Neilson in settlement of money lent to him by the firm. The money had gone from both accounts by Friday lunchtime but was not available to Mr Neilson until the following Friday evening. What had the bank been doing with both parties' money in the meantime?

In these days of electronic banking, why are such delays necessary if not to earn the bank income at the expense of the punter?

ME TV

The Rt Hon David Mellor MP

——— (All channels) ———

THE RECENT career of David Mellor — the first anniversary of whose resignation is being celebrated around now — has generally been interpreted in terms of pathos and head-shaking. People see him, for example, on a show like *A Kick Up The Ballots*, and think: oh what a fall was there, *sic transit gloria mundi*, a week is a long time in politics, there but for the grace of God, and other platitudes connected with professional and spiritual descent.

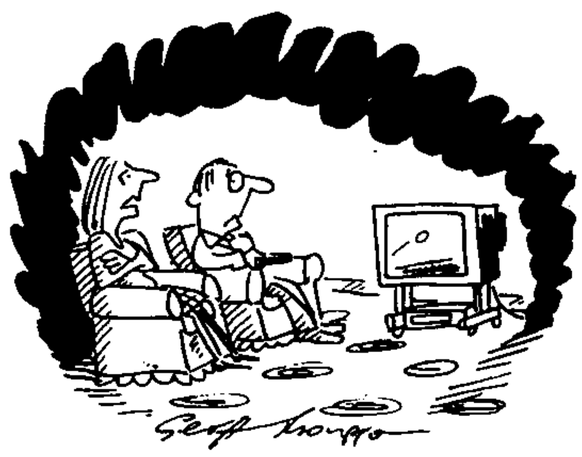
At one level, this is understandable. A political quiz show featuring serving politicians under the chairmanship of Charles Kennedy, *A Kick Up The Ballots* was a try-out for a possible series: a form known in television as a "pilot". But the last pilot to be so irretrievably doomed was on the flightdeck of Pan Am Flight 103.

Anyone who has ever been unfortunate enough to receive an anthology of Westminster wit as a Christmas present could have told Carlton in advance not to waste their development money. So people inevitably think: a year ago, David Mellor was heritage secretary, tipped as a future chancellor. And here he is, instead, swapping dumb puns (the show's title is entirely representative) and limping despatch box anecdotes with Tony Banks and Jeremy Hayes.

The next day, people see Mellor again on *Through The Keyhole* and their sentiments intensify. A year ago, they think, this man was speculating about the interior design of 11 Downing Street, with the house next door as a possible future round in the guessing game. And now, here he is with Eve Pollard, trying to decode Loyd Grossman's teasing clues to the occupant of a secretly-filmed flat or house.

Two days after that, people hear David Mellor presenting his Radio 2 Sunday night series on European music, and they think: a year ago this man was taking part in cabinet discussions on Maastricht. And, now, European harmony means for him the BBC concert orchestra doing a strings version of "Paris in the Springtime".

And, watching or hearing each of these programmes, people think: poor poor sod, poor desperate sod. For to be appearing on these programmes is surely, they assume, the political equivalent of sitting with a hat and a hard-luck placard on the steps of Waterloo station. Mellor, they guess, is compensating with appearance fees and cathode ray fame for what he has accepted is the end of his political career.



"It's not what I imagined when you said you had a box for Wimbledon"

But they would be quite wrong. Mellor is playing a much cleverer game. The way it works is this. The Major administration is unnaturally obsessed with the media. Although the prime minister regularly rejects the idea that the media should dictate the make-up of a cabinet, in his case they do. Mellor, Lamont and Mates all went because, in whole or in part, of the accumulated weight of their public infamy. What Mellor has cleverly appreciated is that if you can be kicked out for being on television a lot in a damaging light, then it follows it might be possible to return by being on TV a lot in an anodyne and populist light.

Hence, viewers who think it sad and suicidal when they see Mr Mellor in his new broadcasting persona — a sort of toothy, grinny version of Jimmy Tarbuck's broadcasting style — are missing the point. As the government becomes more and more unpopular, the desperate Mr Major will hit on the idea of bringing a TV star in to his cabinet. Because the British parliamentary system, unlike the American, prevents preferment without election, there will be only one man who fits the bill: TV's "Dave" Mellor, the cheeky chappie.

At this point, he will benefit from the short-termism which is another celebrated feature of the current government. "Mellor", the PM will mutter during a future reshuffle, "didn't he do something he shouldn't have with a woman. I saw it on television at the time." And the chief whip will scratch his head and reply: "No, no, that was Mellors wasn't it? Bad business with the cripple's wife." And TV's "Dave" Mellor will be back at the big table in the greatest game.

It is so clever that other sacked ministers are bound to copy it. Prepare for *Blind Mates*, a TV dating programme starring the former Northern Ireland minister, or *Matey Matey*, his mid-afternoon chat-show for housewives. Colonel Mates would soon be known affectionately as "Ol' Eyebrows", the studio audience applauding his sign-off catchphrase: "So, remember, don't let those beggars — yes, missus, I said beggars — get you down." And prepare for the poignant moment on *Through The Keyhole* when guest Norman Lamont — watching footage of a residence with regency furniture, lake and 18 bedrooms, guesses "Is it, David, is it Domeywood?" and bursts in to tears.

There would inevitably be such painful moments along the way, but this is what the shrewd politician with a stalled career must do. So you really shouldn't think — when you see the Rt Hon David Mellor these days — poor, poor desperate sod.

'Square Eyes'

MEDIA NEWS

A DESPERATE effort to raise morale and get staff behind the BBC's discredited management has run into trouble before it has begun.

The idea was that every single member of staff should, in groups of 100, meet senior managers and each other in one of 258 one-day conferences starting next month on July 14, Bastille Day.

Given the board of management's popularity and that most staff feel they have more important things to do, like making programmes, takers have been few. Arm-twisting looks inevitable as staff are dragooned into attendance. The management-speak revel will be led by "facilitators" and "systems consultants" under Bob Nelson, the gloriously entitled head of "corporate management development".

Staff will be issued with fact books on the BBC so they can become "ambassadors" for the new-look (ie dismantled) corporation. "If staff can't answer questions of concern to viewers and listeners, how can we pretend to be open and accountable?" says Nelson. He might well ask. No one has noticed Birt or his management colleagues pushing themselves forward to defend the biggest deficit in the BBC's history, dodgy contract deals, expenses fiddling, tax evasion or salary rises of 30 percent for senior managers and 1.5 percent for mere staff.

The cost of the exercise grates with staff, too. The BBC has somehow found £300,000 to refurbish the old *Radio Times* building at 35 Marylebone High Street at a time when basic programme making facilities are being closed and budgets squeezed. Nelson justifies the spending as giving the BBC a "purpose-made conference facility" for the future.

HAS THE ageing Rupert Murdoch finally become two tabloid sections short of the full Sunday newspaper? It certainly seems so judging by an amazing interview he gave to the *New Yorker* last month.

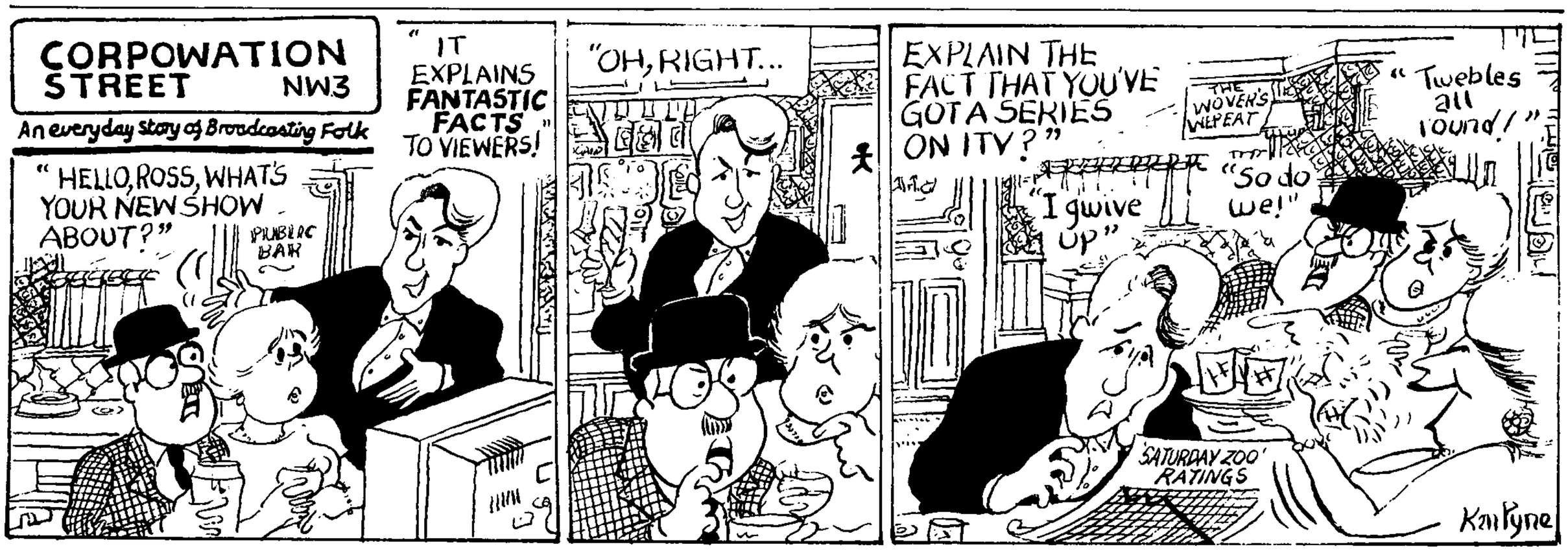
"What wouldn't you do?" the media baron was asked. "You wouldn't do anything that you couldn't live with, that would be against your principles," replied the born-again Christian. "It's a very difficult question if you're a man of conscience."

[*There will now be a short intermission while readers fetch a plastic bowl to throw up into.*]

Murdoch, the man of conscience who sacked 5,500 people in one day in 1986 while transferring his British newspapers to Wapping, is also chairman of 20th Century Fox. He went on to attack *Basic Instinct* as "a film of no redeeming moral values", before complaining about "invasions of privacy" and "the decline in family values".

FACT: His TV show *A Current Affair* has produced programmes with edifying titles like Hollywood Sex, Topless Haircut, Killer Doctor, Sexy Calenders, Superbowl Hookers, Felony Nannies, Teacher Pervert and Sex Addiction.

Asked how he reconciled the two Murdochs — the citizen who embraces family values with the proprietor who "sometimes undermines those values", the Digger replied: "Without being specific or apologizing for anything — I'm sure I've made lots of mistakes in the last 60 years."


CORPOWATION STREET NW3
An everyday story of Broadcasting Folk
" HELLO, ROSS, WHAT'S YOUR NEW SHOW ABOUT?"
PUBLIC BAR
" IT EXPLAINS FANTASTIC FACTS TO VIEWERS!"
"OH, RIGHT...
EXPLAIN THE FACT THAT YOU'VE GOT A SERIES ON ITV?"
THE WOVEN'S REPEAT
" I gwive up"
"So do we!"
" Twebles all round!"
'SATURDAY ZOO' RATINGS
Kal Pyne

I-BSkyB

Amazing Ali is a TV dish

★ ALLURING Ali appeared on Sky telly, so no wonder they call it set alight TV! Our Liverpool lovely won a bottle of massage oil on the game show Love at First Sight. No doubt Ali, 18, put the ratings up — she has a figure that is certainly worth viewing.

The Sun

CONTRIBUTOR: M. Turner

An occasional column for which readers are invited to submit Sky-plugs masquerading as news items in Murdoch papers. The usual £10 will be paid.

BAD NEWS for caterer-turned-broadcaster Gerry Robinson. The films subsidiary of his increasingly depressed Granada Television is facing a massive damages claim from Ferndale, producer of the Oscar-winning Irish film *My Left Foot*.

The large sums of money expected by the producers have yet to arrive in Dublin, allegedly because of the film's US box-office returns. Granada held world distribution rights and the producers are demanding compensation for what they claim is Granada's negligence in selling on the American rights to Miramax.

Granada says the claim is groundless and has tried to persuade Dublin judge Paul Carney to refuse to hear the case. However, the judge accepted jurisdiction and a full trial will take place. Granada can therefore expect to discover at an early opportunity how expensive the Irish legal profession can be.

BOREDOM and management obstinacy are proving expensive at the new Birtian Broadcasting Company.

A new studio set is being torn down at *Look East* in Norwich only months after it was fitted at a cost of hundreds of thousands of pounds — because viewers find it dull and presenters say it is unworkable.

Staff in the old city centre mansion that houses the evening opt-out have been told to deny that it has been an expensive flop. Managers have given them a range of euphemisms to disguise the (management) blunder.

The programme was broadcast from an inexpensive but practical set in a corner of the newsroom until BBC mandarins decided they wanted presenters to look serious and Birtian (aka extremely dull). Consultants were called in and a set built in a downstairs studio. Front of camera staff — not the management — said from the start that it was a mistake.

Presenters were forced to sit side-on to camera, facing each other along what looked like a baize-covered refectory table. The result — stiff presentation to go with the new, endlessly tedious style of "in-depth" reporting. Audiences have tumbled as viewers switch to Anglia's flimsy but entertaining rival. The BBC high-ups have decided to rebuild something very similar to the old set.

AN UNSEEMLY divorce case is threatening to poison the air at Scottish Television.

Head of Gaelic Rhoda Macdonald has been warned by her husband that if their divorce reaches the high court she can expect him to drag in several Scottish names, including Rangers' soccer star Ally McCoist and STV's own chief executive, £140,000 pa Alistair Moffat.

Rhoda is claiming £100,000 from her husband and childhood sweetheart, kiddies' Gaelic entertainer Donnie Macleod. She says she always supported him and played a great part in ensuring he had a successful career.

Although many years ago she was his straight-person while he sang popular Gaelic ditties like "I Have A Tractor", his show has always been on BBC Scotland. The Scottish tabloids fell over each other to dish the dirt and both the *Daily Record* and the Scottish edition of the *Sun* obtained copies of photos showing Rhoda and Alistair Moffatt on a foreign beach. So far they have been browbeaten into silence by the combined might of STV and Rangers Football Club.

CHESS PUZZLE

THE TIMES WORLD CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP

AS GARY Kasparov and Nigel Short limber up for their forthcoming "World Chess Championship" in London, the air is thick with talk of libel writs. Much of it comes from Ray "The Penguin" Keene, *The Times*'s chess correspondent, whose involvement in the unofficial "championship" has been chronicled in the last two issues of the *Eye*.

Keene's business partner Rod Large has issued a writ against the *Independent* over a recent diary story. Keene himself is threatening to sue the *British Chess Magazine* for running a photo of him with the caption "Would you buy a second-hand world championship from this man?" Even an amateur chess player in north London, John Roycroft, received menacing calls from Keene after sending a letter to an American chess magazine in which he described the Penguin as a "media manipulator"; Roycroft was so intimidated by Keene's warning of legal action that he withdrew the letter.

Similar tactics were employed against four British grandmasters — David Norwood, Michael Adams, John Nunn and Tony Miles — who were intending to write a private letter to the editor of *The Times* congratulating him on his newspaper's sudden enthusiasm for chess but also querying the wisdom of allowing the Penguin to muscle in on the venture. Keene somehow got wind of this before the letter had even been signed, let alone posted; his crony Adam Black immediately rang Adams and Norwood to warn them that they would be facing "a £250,000 defamation suit" if they persisted. The letter was not sent.

Meanwhile the *Eye* has had no reaction from the litigious Penguin to our recent articles about him. But his employers, Times Newspapers Limited, have sent us a solicitors' letter protesting at our "grossly misleading" assertions about the World Chess Championship, which have been "bordering on the defamatory". The solicitors, Townleys, list six "principal inaccuracies" in our coverage:

1 Ray Keene, they say, is not an official or board member of the breakaway Professional Chess Association, "and does not represent the PCA in any capacity". How odd, then, that in an article about how Kasparov and Short came to form the PCA, published in *The Times* on 27 February, Keene wrote: "I was asked to help draft the document announcing the break and the decision that the players would in future run the world championship." In a feature about the PCA in the May issue of *Chess Life* magazine, Keene is quoted as saying "our prospects look good... we are off to a fast start." If the Penguin does not represent the PCA "in any capacity", why does he make so free with the first person plural when talking about it?

2 "Raymond Keene did not oversee the bids for the PCA World Championship. This was in fact done by a London firm of solicitors, Messrs Jaques & Lewis." Bids were indeed submitted to the solicitors; but after that the players and the "PCA" went away to examine them before the choice was announced.

3 "*The Times* did not win the right to hold the match, but won the right to act as exclusive title sponsors in the UK. Its bid partners, Telechess World Promotions Ltd, are the organisers and managers of the event." This is perhaps the silliest and pettiest point in the whole letter. It is, in any case, contradicted by what *The Times* itself reported on its front page on 31 March: "*The Times* has secured the Kasparov-Short world chess championship match... The Russian world chess champion, Gary Kasparov, and his British challenger, Nigel Short, last night accepted a £1.7 million bid from *The Times*..." A week earlier, another front-page story in the paper noted that the bids to "host the chess world championship" included "one from *The Times*".

4 "*The Times*/Telechess bid [of £1.7m] was in fact the highest realistic bid on the table. The other 'serious' bid to which your article alludes was that of the 'London Chess Group' which, whilst reported at £2 million, was not supported by any satisfactory form of security or guarantee to anything like this level." This is pure balderdash. The London Chess Group's bid of £2 million was supported by letters of guarantee for *more* than that sum from the microchip company Intel, the BBC, the *Evening Standard* and the Corporation of London. One can see why *The Times* is embarrassed to admit that it was the underbidder, since this raises the question of how it nevertheless managed to win the "auction", but the facts are plain.

5 "The PCA may be seen in some quarters as essentially a 'one-event organisation', but it is not. The PCA are developing a full schedule of chess events and aim to be a genuine, modern alternative to FIDE [the international chess federation], attracting the world's best professional players into its ranks." Who are these players? Most leading professionals who have made public their opinions on the breakaway outfit have been scathing about it.

6 Finally, *The Times*'s solicitors complain about our comments "in relation to the pricing of tickets for the championship". Prices, they say, "have been set at a level which reflects the unique and historic context of the event". In fact, our article was if anything generous to *The Times* in mentioning only the cheapest seat price, of £45. Dress circle seats will cost £150. Compare this with the previous world championship match, between Kasparov and Karpov, in Lyons in 1990, where a ticket to watch a game cost 70 French francs (roughly £7). And that was a universally accepted contest between the two best players in the world. In this year's unofficial match, Kasparov is taking on a player who is barely in the top ten.

Messrs Townleys conclude their letter by insisting "that a statement of correction is printed in the next issue of *Private Eye* in terms to be agreed with us on *The Times*'s behalf." Our reply to *The Times's* solicitors is the same as that in the famous case of *Arkell vs. Pressdram*.

Robert Moore

IN *EYE 818* we reported that the future career of ITN reporter Robert Moore was in jeopardy following allegations that he and members of his team had inflated their expenses in Bosnia. In fact, an ITN investigation into the allegation completely cleared Mr Moore of any involvement in the alleged fiddling of expenses. We accept that he is entirely innocent and apologise to him for any suggestion otherwise.

"Why is it we can't seem to produce any British stalkers?"

ROTTEN BOROUGHS

BIRMINGHAM

BIRMINGHAM'S self-styled black community leader Gus Williams continues to win control of ever-greater chunks of public money, despite his bizarre record.

His latest move is to win control of the opted-out George Dixon comprehensive school and its £2 million budget.

Williams sprang into the public eye during the Handsworth riots when he suddenly made himself "spokesman" for the thousands of free shoppers.

The next thing heard of him was when he won vast grants to stage the dubious Handsworth carnival. Huge chunks of the cash poured in by the city council to try to restore peace were never properly accounted for. Eventually it went bust and was taken over by the council.

Williams popped up again as chief executive of the Acafess job training centre, which he used as a clearing house for deals on the international commodities market. Papers obtained by the *Eye* allege that he used the Acafess tax and telex to arrange deals in Nigerian and Iranian crude oil, West Indian sugar, rice and other goods.

Acafess collapsed when it ran out of money and could not even buy wood for its carpentry trainees. The Birmingham training and enterprise council (TEC) cut off its funds, closing it down — but only after its trainees went on strike and marched on the TEC, demanding Williams be sacked. Williams escaped questioning on the huge losses.

Coincidentally, Williams is a senior member of Ladywood Labour party, home seat of the aptly-named Councillor Albert Bore (*Eyes passim*). Bore was chairman at the George Dixon comprehensive but quit when parents voted to opt out. This rare gesture of principle was somewhat sullied when he and head teacher Carlton Duncan installed Williams in Bore's place.

Coincidentally, Duncan and Bore are directors of the Birmingham TEC which gave Acafess its huge grants.

HACKNEY

COUNCILLOR Cam Matheson's campaign to "clean-up" Britain's poorest borough has yielded some strange results.

Matheson recently joined another Labour councillor, Tom Silverlock, in a new two-man independent group, having spent the last year trying unsuccessfully to reenter the Labour group which had expelled him.

An enraged Matheson sent members of the Labour group an open letter savaging the party for being "under the control of a vindictive and spiteful cabal" after being accused of distributing lewd photographs of a leading councillor — "showing him with his penis in his hand as well as his hand firmly buried in a female member of staff".

The "leading councillor" was none other than Labour's Joko Macfoy, but the photographs have been passed round not by Matheson, but by Macfoy's wife, Labour councillor Mameisiah Margei, who discovered the snaps at home. She was so upset she stood outside Shoreditch town hall distributing photocopies.

WANDSWORTH

JOHN MAJOR'S favourite borough is having trouble with its schools.

Leaders of the privatisation-mad Tory council are to close one of the borough's most popular primary schools, Hearnville, despite a two-year campaign by the school to stay open.

By an amazing coincidence, Hearnville's premises will be taken over, next September, by the fee-paying Hornsby House school, where Tory councillor Vanessa Graham is a governor.

One of the reasons cited by Wandsworth Tories for the deal is that Hearnville, with 150 pupils, is too small to keep going. Hornsby House also has 150 pupils.

MURKEYSIDE

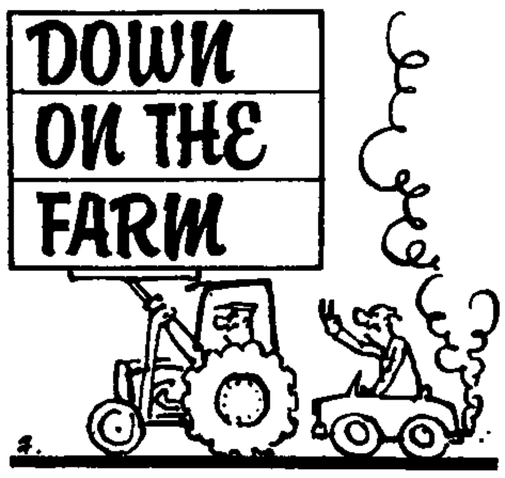
DAWN BOOTH, who hopes to lead Liverpool council when Harry Rimmer retires in a year or so, is working on her politically correct credentials by urging the council to stop members using offensive language in the chamber.

The new strictures are not just aimed at yob male councillors with beer guts who make traditional remarks about the lasses. Such is the colourful nature of Liverpool politics that offensive sexual remarks are often made by men against men.

This is particularly so in the historically tiff-ridden Liberal Democrat group, which for years has been plagued by breakaway maverick councillor Steve Radford. He frequently refers to his erstwhile colleagues as "luv" and "duckie", but he and his Lib Dem leader Mike Storey call each other worse things in private.

A Lib-Dem council candidate who works as a taxi driver recently observed Radford having what seemed to be a late night discussion of the Ugandan oral tradition with another man in Liverpool city centre. He informed Storey of this, and was advised by the LD leader to tell the police. Radford was hauled in by Inspector Knacker — not for the first time — but claimed the incident was merely a lovers' tiff.

Since then rumours have resurfaced about a "dossier" on Mike Storey's own alleged peccadilloes, and at least four members of the Lib-Dem group are said to be using it to question Storey's political credibility. Dirty business, politics.



with 'New Muckspreader'

THE PROMOTION of John Selwyn Gummer from agriculture to environment shows that John Major is now so out of touch he doesn't even know what a disaster Gummer has been at MAFF — otherwise he would have dumped him.

Why Major should remain ignorant is a mystery. A good proportion of the 19,000 letters to Downing Street each week must surely have told him — and he should also have been briefed by the chief expert on his policy unit, one Lucy Neville Rolfe.

As insiders have become increasingly aware, Ms Neville Rolfe may have special difficulties in making sure the true horror of the MAFF disaster isn't reported fully to the prime minister. In her domestic capacity, she is Mrs Richard Packer — wife of the chap who just happens to be permanent secretary to the Min of Ag and Fish.

THREE years after the imposition of the most rigorous food safety law in the world, salmonella food poisoning is still exploding to record levels — up again by 13 per cent this year.

This may have something to do with the startling failure of the public health laboratory service (PHLS) to give any scientific basis to food safety policies. It has not carried out a detailed food poisoning analysis since 1989.

But some experts are beginning to suspect that a major and as yet unreported cause of the increase may be the way food processors are having to cut corners in order to squeeze some profit from the prices their rapacious supermarket customers are prepared to pay.

They are being forced to recover the last grams of protein from fish and animal carcases. Bones are squeezed in hydraulic presses or spun in giant equivalents of spin dryers. Fish remains are picked clean with high-pressure water jets. The resultant slurries are used to make, among other things, fish fingers, chicken nuggets and beefburgers.

Surprisingly, the response of the hygiene police, who have led the reign of terror against small-scale traditional food producers (with little effect other than to drive thousands out of business) has been to team up with the slurry-makers, represented by the Food and Drinks Federation, the trade association for almost all of Britain's largest industrial food and drink companies.

The federation has gone into partnership with the Institution of Environmental Health officers to launch "Foodlink", a vapid PR exercise supposedly aimed at "raising public awareness of food hygiene". According to one leading academic food expert, this is nothing more than "a smokescreen from an unholy alliance", which enables big food companies to distract public attention from their own possible central part in declining food standards — possible central part in declining food standards — while the hygiene police happily collude in the deception to cover up their own complete failure to curb the fastest food-poisoning rise in history.

FEW of last year's intake of new Tories were quicker to make their mark than Dr Liam Fox, the young Scottish doctor who inherited a safe seat at Woodspring, North Somerset.

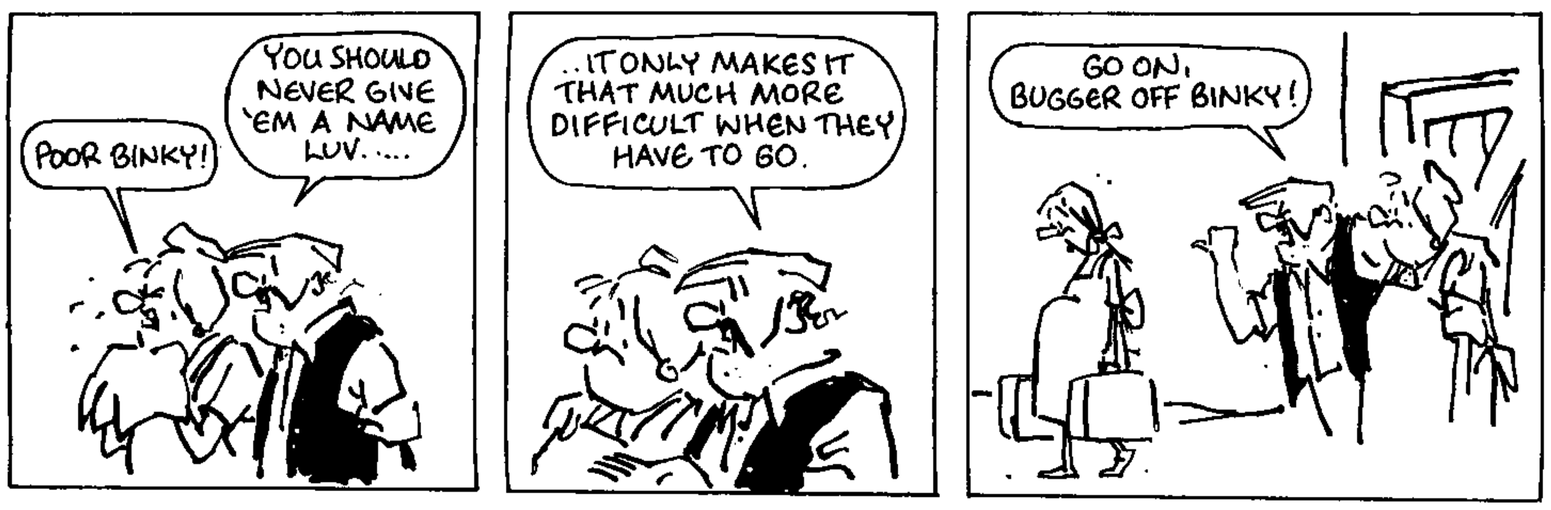
He had already won golden opinions in his constituency by his apparent independence of mind, as his appeal to the electorate to "vote for the man, not the party". These were redoubled when he fearlessly led the campaign against MAFF's insane policy to close down hundreds of rural slaughterhouses.

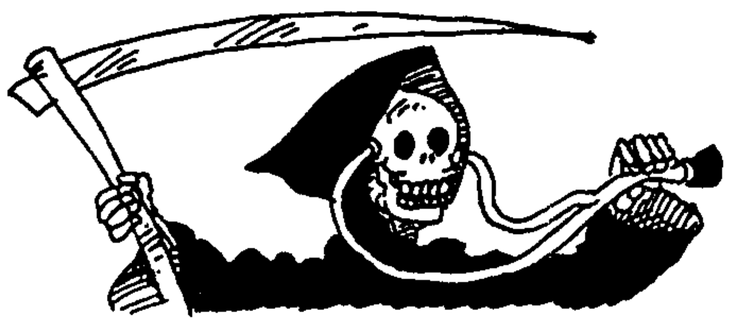
After two brilliant speeches in the Commons, by January this year not only were many influential figures in his farming constituency praising him to the skies, but he was attracting attention across the country as one Tory MP who was prepared to stand up courageously for justice and truth, regardless of the diktat of party bosses.

Then, alas, Dr Fox suddenly went strangely quiet. There was talk of a private meeting with Mr Major, and interviews with the whips, following which the Dr suddenly lost interest in slaughterhouses.

Last week, all was explained. Tucked away at the bottom of the reshuffle list it was announced that Dr Fox had been appointed as PPS to Michael Howard. He has joined the grey, anonymous ranks of the place-seekers, and the voters of Woodspring, so recently singing his praises, are reported to be stunned that they were so easily taken in by another dim Tory on his way up the greasy pole.

Old Macdonald ALBERT


POOR BINKY!
YOU SHOULD NEVER GIVE 'EM A NAME LUV....
..IT ONLY MAKES IT THAT MUCH MORE DIFFICULT WHEN THEY HAVE TO GO.
GO ON, BUGGER OFF BINKY!



DOING THE ROUNDS

ALONG with all the other threats hanging over healthcare in the capital, why is the government forging ahead with the closure of St Bartholomew's casualty department?

Last year Virginia Bottomley promised "early consultation" on the future of Barts. When staff, GPs and patients were consulted about the proposed dissolution of the **Barts and Homerton shadow trust**, 91 percent disagreed and so it was promptly dissolved.

The same fate is likely to meet the casualty department, which Mrs Lobotomy claims is "relatively small". In fact it is the same size as half the others in the UK. In the last few years, it has dealt swiftly and expertly with casualties from bombs at the Tower of London, the Old Bailey, the Baltic Exchange and Bishopsgate, rail disasters at Cannon St and Moorgate and the fire at King's Cross.

There is no evidence that other casualty departments could cope with the extra workload. In addition to residents, Barts serves one million tourists and commuters every day. Last year, it treated 30,000 *new* casualties, fewer than normal because of the recession's effect on the building industry. 48 percent of attenders were classified as suffering "urgent, life threatening illness", which is above the national average, and 50 percent had "urgent, non-life threatening illness". In all, 98 percent of the casualties were beyond the scope of general practice. The 15 patients a day who currently require hospital admission via casualty are unlikely to find a bed elsewhere.

In 1990, 146 critically ill patients were treated in the casualty resuscitation room. By 1992 this had risen to 271, 78 of whom were transferred to the intensive care unit. These patients occupied 456 bed days in total and, if Barts casualty were to close, two more intensive care beds would need to be created elsewhere. At present, it is impossible to find a single free staffed intensive care bed anywhere in London.

● **SCARBOROUGH NHS Trust** is to close **Cross Lane hospital** in a bid to recoup a £1 million deficit. Chief executive Rob Thompson said the closure "would not affect patients". The cash-strapped **Lancaster acute hospitals NHS trust** has made 20 nurses redundant and, with 40 weeks of the financial year to go, is circulating a memo entitled "Procedure for the closure of medical beds".

● STUART Dickens, chief executive of the impecunious **South Birmingham health authority** has resigned after four weeks' sick leave with a £33,000 handshake. SBHA is soon to enforce a further 1,000 redundancies to pay off its £10 million debt.

● **ST MARY'S hospital** in **Newport** is reducing its quota of fully qualified nurses and offering Project 2000 nurses short-term contracts only. However, money has been found to redress the few remaining nurses in "Windowlene pink" culottes and tunic tops. Nearby **Royal Gwent hospital** is bringing back pay beds to raise money. Single rooms will be hired out at £20 a night to NHS patients who want that bit extra. And **Health Care Gwent** is having to sell off land in **Chepstow** to Tesco so it can build two new health units. In return, Tesco will build a superstore and a housing estate at **St Lawrence hospital**.

● **GRANTHAM and Kesteven general hospital** sent a glossy pamphlet to locals describing its "total commitment to the very best patient care" just days after the Beverley Allit trial. Residents might be more reassured if the money were put towards a public inquiry.

● PURCHASER-provider negotiations between **South Essex district health authority** and **Southend health care NHS trust** have broken down, leaving the trust penniless. An extra 2,500 patients are likely to join waiting lists by next year and, if more money is not forthcoming, the trust warns that "patients requiring urgent hospital treatment could be affected".

● A PATIENT was recently referred by his GP to orthopaedic outpatients at **Wirral's Arrow Park hospital**. Three months later, he received a letter saying he was on a waiting list for the appointment. Having attended the clinic, he was referred to the physiotherapy department and, after another two and a half months he received another letter placing him on another waiting list for an appointment. He is still waiting.

● THE private Cleveland laboratory in **Aberdeen's St John hospital** has won a contract to provide services to **Foresterhill** GP fundholders despite its lack of accreditation under the Scottish home and health department approved scheme.

● ANGRY low-paid workers at **Jimmy's — St James' in Leeds** — not surprised that their bosses top the NHS pay league. The board of **St James' Hospital Trust** were paid £459,000 in 1991-2, the highest directors' payroll in the country.

The then chief executive Ian Donnachie received £75,000, five other directors were paid an average of £55,000 each, and the rest was divided up among the remaining five directors — not bad for mostly part-time posts.

Second in the league table was the **United Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust**, which paid its 12 members £455,000.

Hundreds of Leeds volunteers who raise funds to buy hospital equipment were no doubt interested to see the league table.

● DR PETER Harrison, ex-clinical director of medicine at **Bristol's Southmead Health Services NHS Trust**, has won a high court apology and substantial damages from the trust and its ex-chairman Colin Williams following Harrison's enforced resignation last June (*Eye* 800). This came after widely publicised revelations about the acute shortage of medical house-officers at the trust and its effect on patient care. Williams told reporters this was solely Dr Harrison's responsibility and that he had never raised the matter with the trust board.

In fact, Harrison had briefed several members of the board and senior managers about the situation. Furthermore, both Williams and the DHA chairman M.J. Crowson had been sent a letter from the junior doctors some weeks previously highlighting "the dire situation". Neither had replied. A subsequent inquiry found that two patients who had died had not done so as a result of understaffing.

M.D.

O·B·N

Let us sack the whole government and beg Lady Thatcher to return and save this country, as Churchill did in his time.

BERNADETTE GRIFFITHS
Letter to Daily Mail

Submitted by A.P. Mason.

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

Sally Deedes

IN AUGUST 1991 the "Jones" family moved out of their home near Perth, Scotland, and put £30,000 worth of valuable items, like antiques and soft furnishings, into storage at Pickfords' depot in Perth.

They employed a contractor to pack the furniture in a container and deliver it, and the delivery was acknowledged by the depot manager. Due to a mix up, the Joneses never received any formal paperwork, however.

In July 1992, Mr Jones wanted to retrieve an item from storage and rang Pickfords, only to be told the depot had closed and its furniture moved to Dundee. He expressed surprise the firm had not thought to inform its customers that their household goods were being trundled around the country, and he received an apology.

Last September the family moved into their new house and asked Pickfords to deliver the container. The firm agreed to do so but said it had not been paid. It had not been paid because it had not sent a bill.

The first delivery was delayed since Pickfords had not received the cheque, so Mr Jones drove to Dundee and delivered it personally. A few days later the container arrived. When the cheery driver said: "Don't worry, this won't take long", Mr Jones was surprised. He was even more surprised when, on opening it, it turned out to be full of junk, none of which had anything to do with the Joneses.

A nationwide search found the soft furnishings, not the antiques. The family was distraught. Mr Jones asked Pickfords for compensation of £30,000, plus £10,000 damages. Pickfords refused, sending through its legal department £5,000 on account. The payment was accepted on account.

Enter the loss adjustor, Thomas Howell-Self, who through photographs and valuations provided by Mr Jones tried to establish the value of the loss. It became clear the loss adjustors were simply trying to bring the value down to what is euphemistically called "market value" — a value agreed between willing buyer and seller. Since Mr Jones did not wish to sell, this was nonsense. He simply wanted the return of his property, which Pickfords had lost.

Pickfords at first denied it had lost anything (so why pay £5,000 on account?) and more recently it offered £9,000, which the Joneses have dismissed. The case now languishes with the sheriff's court in Dundee, and Mr "Jones" is more and more determined — especially having read two recent articles.

The first was in the May edition of *Antique Trades Gazette*, in which it is reported how police reprimanding a man for illegal parking stumbled on antiques — part of a series of thefts from the Pickfords depot in Ilford valued at £100,000.

The second article was in the *Daily Telegraph*. In it Pickfords are quoted as saying: "We are not interested in the bottom end of the market. We are offering a premium service which we consider to be value for money. We can't compete with small removal companies — most people we deal with have household contents worth at least £35,000."

If readers have similar experiences to the Joneses, this column would very much like to hear from them.

YOBS

HUSBAND

Letters

Lord love a hack!

Sir,

Grovel's references to the UK PRESS GAZETTE'S *award of reporting team of the year to the* FINANCIAL TIMES *team headed by myself (*EYE, *3 June) were correct in every respect except that:*

- *Lord Donoughue did not help me to get any job at the* FT; *he did not even know I was moving there before it was announced.*
- *Lord Donoughue did not appoint me to any position at Kleinwort Benson: I was appointed by others after four sets of interviews, of which he conducted one.*
- *Lord Donoughue's role in the Maxwell affair was not played down in the* FINANCIAL TIMES.

Sorry to spoil a good story.

Yours conspiratorially,
BRONWEN MADDOX,

FINANCIAL TIMES, *London SE1.*

Nat bites

Sir,

If BBC Wales has indeed become a mouthpiece for Plaid Cymru, as you suggest in EYE *821, I am sure there will be many others like myself who will say: "About bloody time."*

News bulletins on the BBC, whether specifically relevant to Scotland and Wales or not, only ever carry the views of politicians belonging to the "Gang of Three" viz. Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrats. Does the establishment media mafia really believe that nationalists only have opinions on independence and nothing else? Presumably so, as nationalist MPs have been few and far between on BBC news commenting on Maastricht, whereas any Tory crackpot who wishes can have a slot.

As for conference coverage, it will give the English-based parties some time to reflect on the feeing of media starvation which the nationalist parties have had to endure, not only in Britain, but in their own countries too.

More power to Aled Eirug's transmitters!

Yours, hoping for fair media exposure,
KEVIN CORDELL,

Dundee.

All party friends

Sir,

In your edition of the 18 June 1993 you stated that I bought property on the cheap in Northern Cyprus after the Greeks were driven out. Wrong. The property was purchased in 1972 in accordance with the laws of the then Greek Cypriot government of President Makarios. For the record I also paid a dollar premium of 25 percent to the Bank of England. So the property was certainly not cheap!

You also stated that I received cheap flights to Cyprus on Noble Air. Wrong again! I have never had either a cheap or free flight to Cyprus. I have always paid the full fare myself. The cheaper flights are by the Greek Cyprus Airways — certainly not the various Turkish airlines!

Sincerely,
JOHN D. TAYLOR MP,

House of Commons, London SW1.

Sir,

In your comments about the parliamentary all party Friends of Northern Cyprus Group on 18 June you stated that some of the "top people" (among whom you were kind enough to include me) had been "curiously silent" over Asil Nadir's flight to Northern Cyprus. This is incorrect: the officers of the group sent a statement to the Press Association (which perhaps you missed) arguing the need for the recognition of the Turkish republic of Northern Cyprus and criticising Asil Nadir's conduct in breaking bail and urging the need for him to return voluntarily to British jurisdiction.

Kind regards.

Sincerely,
ANDREW FAULDS MP,

House of Commons, London SW1.

Bit of a Church-goer

Sir,

I was the subject of an anonymous article printed on 26 March 1993 in PRIVATE EYE.

The lies of the first few paragraphs of that article set the tone for the entire article. I had been a member of the Church of Scientology for seven years before this delusionary "fight" with the Church began. During those seven years Mr Motivala did not object to my being a member of the Church — indeed, until just before I left him, he'd always enjoyed a good relationship with members of the Church and was happy for me to be a Church member. He used to say he liked having an "enlightened" wife! He was perfectly aware of the extent of my involvement, the money I spent and the courses I had done. I had not spent anything like £14,000 on Scientology, a fact Mr Motivala was well aware of. As stated by his brother at the inquest, although Mr Motivala had "alleged" that I had spent the money, after his death his brother checked the accounts and found that most of Mr Motivala's debts had been incurred after I had left him.

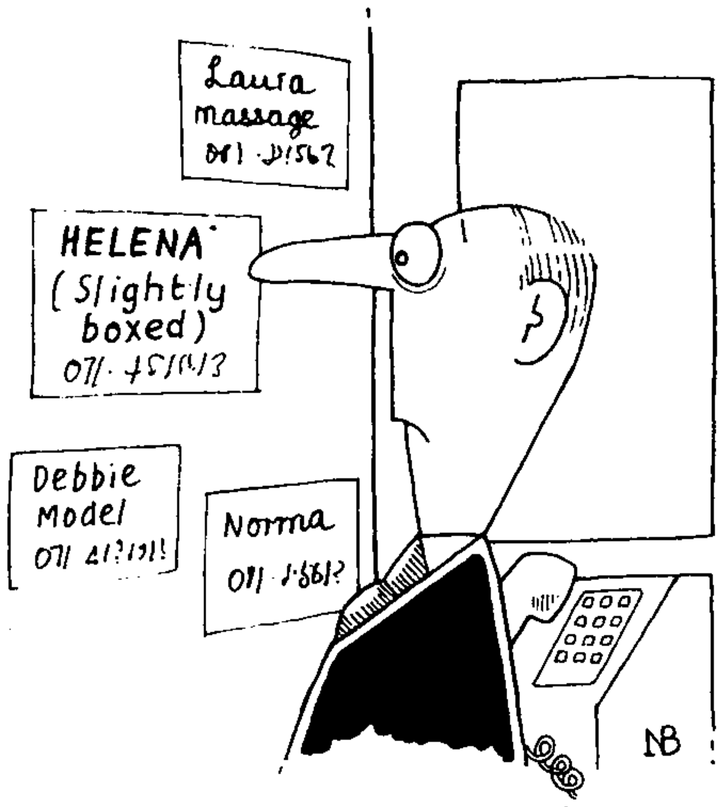
Inspector Hallowes of the police told me that the police didn't think there was anything suspicious about his death but because of the hysterical insistence of Miss Clair Bruce, Mr Motivala's latest girlfriend, the police were forced to investigate. They found nothing suspicious.

The sad facts are that I had tried to leave Mr Motivala three years before, at the time of his first affair with another woman which coincided with his renewed drug taking and his first incidents of physical violence towards me. At that time he had threatened to take his life if I dared to leave, so I stayed. When his violence started again, I said I would leave and he then said that if I left he would take the children from me. He had heard that if he lied about my involvement with Scientology the children would get taken away from me. So I stayed with him for another six months. The day came when he viciously attacked me, upsetting the children, and at that time I fled, taking the children with me. True to his word he began his campaign of lies, all the while telling me that he would stop if I returned home — he told me he would force me back within six months. This time, I refused to be blackmailed by him. He died six months to the day after we left, on the day that we received the dates to go to court over the children's residency.

This is the truth. This has been a very painful experience and the letter you printed in your disgusting Cult Corner did nothing to ease the pain but only made it worse.

Yours faithfully,
MS RUTH TURK,

London W12.



LUVVIES

An actor must suffer for his art. So runs the old theatrical adage. And certainly some of the world's best-known celebrities have put themselves through hell for their films.

Daniel Day-Lewis went to extraordinary lengths for his role as Christy Brown in *My Left Foot*... In his most recent movie, *The Last of the Mohicans*, the actor spent months living off the

land in snake-infested swamps, to get to grips with playing an American Indian.

"Even now I wake up and forget that I'm not an Indian who has to forage for food before dawn breaks," the 35-year-old star admits.

Woman's Realm

Submitted by David Applegate..

An occasional column featuring gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries.

Penh friends

Sir,

In your issue of 7 May 1993, you wrote damagingly of Julio Jeldres who runs the Khmer Institute of Democracy in Phnom Penh. Much of what you wrote was untrue.

You claim that Mr Jeldres had links to the Pinochet regime. This seems to be an attempt to prove guilt by birth. Mr Jeldres is an Australian citizen who was born in Chile. He left Chile for Australia in 1972, a year before Pinochet seized power. He has no connections with Pinochet.

Mr Jeldres is not a director of the newspaper KHMER CONSCIENCE, *as you state.*

Through much of the eighties Jeldres was an aide to Prince Sihanouk in exile. He returned to Phnom Penh with the prince in 1991. Last year Mr Jeldres set up his institute which provides a forum for Cambodian students and others to express themselves freely — a liberty which Cambodians have been given for the first time under the UN administration.

Your fabrications are damaging to Mr Jeldres and his fledgling institute.

Yours,
WILLIAM SHAWCROSS,

Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

Lookalike

Rumplestiltskin

Branson

Sir,

Is it my childish imagination, or do I detect a similarity between that well-known nursery character Rumplestiltskin and that well-known high flyer Richard Branson? I suppose Branson has inherited the former's gift of spinning piles of gold.

Does this mean he may one day stomp off and never be heard of again, like the mannikin?

Unfortunately, I doubt it.

Yours sincerely,
ANDREA WATSON,

Lingfield, Surrey.

I-SPY

Submitted by Andrew Bruno. *£10 paid for similar submissions.* *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Can you dig it?

Sir,

I was appalled to read in the latest issue of your flagging organ a despicable feature in the form of a "spoof" advertisement for a gardening magazine entitled SOD, *clearly a pastiche on the similarly named* GARDENS ILLUSTRATED *published by a Mr John Brown.*

The innocent victim of your public school 2 foot six inch bald headed sarcasm was Mr Brown's talented wife, one of the most talented Art Editors in the field of glossy expensive gardening magazines. To suggest that Mrs Brown's appointment was in any way connected with her being the Publisher's husband is both ludicrous and unfounded. Had you bothered to do your research you would have known that Mrs Brown is an accomplished dabbler in high brow publishing and art editing. As anyone connected with John Brown Publishing would tell you, Mrs Brown had been keenly interested in gardening for at least three weeks prior to her husband handing her this gardening magazine on a plate.

Furthermore, I would refute your suggestion that the magazine was founded on the proceeds of WIZ. *As anyone connected with John Brown Publishing who values their job will tell you,* WIZ *is only one of a highly valued stable of best-selling magazines belonging to Mr Brown. Others include* STICKY WICKET *(1988-89) the comedy cricket magazine for friends of John Brown,* ELECTRIC SOUP *(1990-92) the Scottish adult humour comic and best selling rival to* WIZ, AEROFLOP *(1992-92) the Russian government owned airlines in-flight magazine, bought by Mr Brown the day before the military coup in that country, and* POINT BLANK, *about which little is known.*

You have gone too far this time, Mr Hislop. I will this afternoon be taking out a subscription to your wilting penis, and cancelling it by return of post.

Yours disgusted,
THE EDITORS,

WIZ *magazine, Faxed from: The House of Viz.*

Small talk

Sir,

Only a remarkably insensitive oik (or a Tory) could be unfaithful to the lovely and elfin Mrs Clark, whose likeness appeared in the last issue of your organ. If the pixie-like Mrs Clark needs a sympathetic ear or even a romantic candlelit dinner for two, I for one would be at her disposal.

Yours sincerely,
BRIAN SHARLAND,

London SW17.

Sound advice

Sir,

*At Radio 3, we were as surprised as your correspondent, Mr Price Jones (*EYE *821), when Classic FM started to play recordings of the* RING *operas a week before our live broadcasts, which had been widely publicised in advance. But it's rather odd that he should blame the BBC rather than Classic FM for this sudden competition, since we had broadcast opera on Saturdays long before Classic FM was even a gleam in the eye of the Radio Authority. (When BBC2 made its highly successful last minute decision to televise* STIFFELIO *it joined a Radio 3 live relay which had been planned for months.)*

*Indeed Classic FM's chief executive, John Spearman, having been alerted to this absurdly duplicatory display, acknowledged it was pointless and reprimanded his programmers: "I'm upset it has happened, and I have made my displeasure known" (*CLASSICAL MUSIC, *13 March). So now we can get back to not competing.*

Yours piously,
NICHOLAS KENYON,

Controller, Radio 3, Broadcasting House, London W1.

Colemballs LITERALLY

£10 paid for contributions

"William Byrd, who literally had the ear of Elizabeth the First..."
ANNOUNCER, Classic-FM
(John Benfield Curtis)

"Last time out he won at Folkestone, literally pulling a bus..."
LORD OAKSEY, Channel 4
(J.E. Bacon)

"Here under the roof at Earls Court is quite literally the whole world of boating."
MIKE SMITH
(Chris Whittaker)

"Everyone has their ears glued to their radios — quite literally."
STEPHEN SACKER, BBC
(Derek Agnew)

"Blackburn Rovers are now taking Brian Clough's team literally to the cleaners."
BRIAN CLARKE, Piccadilly Gold
(Ray Miles)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN

THAT'S HIM! THAT'S THE MAN OF MY DREAMS...
..HE'S COMING AFTER ME DOWN THIS DARK ALLEY AND I CANT RUN - MY LEGS FEEL LIKE LEAD..
OOOH, HORRIBLE

Letter from Paraguay

from Our Own Correspondent

"LONG live democracy! Long live the victory of the eternal, patriotic and glorious party of the Colorados!" Thus, in front of flag-waving supporters bussed into our capital, Asuncion, the leader of the Colorado party claimed victory in the presidential elections an hour before the polls closed.

Reported to be our first democratic elections ever, the timing was embarrassing for a government keen to impress upon the world its democratic credentials. So were some of the measures adopted by the government on election day — like the closing of the frontier with Argentina and Brazil to stop hundreds of exiled Paraguayans coming back to vote for the opposition; and the cutting of all six telephone lines into Saka, the only body carrying out an independent count of the votes.

None of this pleased Jimmy Carter, head of a delegation of international observers. His personal request to the Colorado candidate, Juan Carlos Wasmosy, to delay celebrations was ignored. While his visit to President Andres Rodriguez, the genial general who in 1989 toppled the old dictator Stroessner so that he could get his hands on the cocaine-smuggling booty, succeeded in getting Saka's phone lines reconnected for half an hour.

In keeping with the new "democratic" Paraguay, the Colorado party bosses who have ruled us for 46 years were quite prepared to hold elections and even, reluctantly, to allow press freedom. But run a real risk of losing the elections? Er, no.

In the weeks before the election — and the arrival of prying eyes from abroad — it was business as usual, with the Colorados exploiting their control over the state apparatus. Under instructions from security chief Colonel Aquiles Garcia de Zuniga, employees of the huge Itaipu hydroelectric power station on the Brazil border spent days "updating" the electoral lists.

Other public employees were bullied into taking part in the neo-fascist demos across the country. One functionary, Antonio Ibarra, believed in the new democratic constitution, which bans the use of public buildings for electoral purposes. He stopped employees pasting Colorado posters to the walls of the justice ministry and lost his job.

When opinion polls began to suggest the opposition might win, the military-Colorado complex activated the second line of defence: intimidation. The most powerful military officer in the country, General Lino Oviedo, made a fiery speech in which he stated categorically: "The decision of the armed forces is to co-govern with the glorious and immortal Colorado party for centuries on end, whoever likes it, whoever is annoyed by it, whoever fights or screams against it." In case anyone hadn't got the message, he went on: "We have courage and guts — balls between our legs — and we are not going to fold our arms and do nothing."

For the next fortnight he stomped the country, issuing threats and distributing patronage. With our long history of coups and counter-coups, we Paraguayans know who has clout, and we listened. The polls suggested the Colorados were bouncing back.

Even so, some of the party faithful had their doubts. Colorado factions had feuded viciously in the run-up to the election, so the third line of defence — barefaced fraud — was prepared.

Cutting Saka's telephones was a manoeuvre to gain time on election day to see if this last resort, so damaging to Paraguay's foreign image, would be necessary. But in case it was, it was best to have the population prepared. The big victory rally, accompanied by scores of cars driving menacingly through the streets waving flags and, on occasion, brandishing guns, was psychological warfare. The Colorados were telling everyone that they were in no mood to give up power.

In the event, only a little fraud was perpetrated, not enough to have changed the result. The Colorados really did win, thanks to General Oviedo (now tipped to be the Colorados' next presidential candidate, after his retirement from the army). Carter and cohorts testified somewhat uneasily at a press conference to the honesty of the elections; but as Carter said in a rueful aside, they had won "the cleanest bent election in Paraguay's history".

FUNNY OLD WORLD

● "I TOLD them the body didn't look anything like my son, but they just shrugged and said: 'Of course he doesn't, he's been dead for two days.' What was I to do?" exclaimed Mrs Boonmee Thongtai to reporters.

Doctors at Chulalongkorn Hospital in Bangkok had summoned her to the mortuary, telling her that her son Borvorn had just died. "They told me to arrange the cremation damned quick. I protested. Cremations don't come cheap," declared Mrs Thongthai, who, despite her protests that the corpse was a complete stranger, was forced to take the body home.

"I went to Borvorn's house to ask his widow why she had not attended the cremation, and was more than a little surprised to find Borvorn sitting at home watching television. So I went straight back to the hospital. All hell broke loose. When I told them we had cremated the wrong corpse, they lashed me for not checking more carefully, before taking the body away. Can you believe that?"

A hospital director said that he was not surprised by the incident. "This happens all the time. Emergency patients use other people's identity cards to get urgent treatment. It's bound to lead to inconvenience." *(The Nation, Thailand, 5/6/93. Spotter — George Kershaw)*

—●—

● "I DO not know what all the fuss is about," Mr Abba Bina told members of the press. "I simply placed an announcement in the local newspaper that I have resigned from the Sheriff's Office National Judicial Staff Services and am now trading as 'Mr Shit'. These are the facts of the matter. I can

be located at Blackout Village, behind 4 Mile Traffic Registry. And you'd be wise to contact me, for I am Mr Shit, your specialist in chicken, cow and horse manure. Now leave me in peace." (Papua New Guinea Postcourier, 4/6/93. Spotter — D.A. Jackson)

—●—

● "IT IS not our wish that the garage be punished. It is God's," said Malcolm Heap, founder of the Fundamentalist Christian group 'Midnight Ministries'.

Heap went berserk after a BMW garage in Aylesbury refused to give him a £22,000 car for free. "God spoke to my son Richard, saying that we would receive the gift of a red 325i BMW estate car to do His work. So I wrote to the garage, telling them the ins and outs and advising them to get the car ready. We even bought spare parts for the 325i in advance. God had told us to buy a little cap to go on top of the windscreen wiper bottle, and some oil and a filter, because we would need them. But, when we went to collect the car, the sales staff just laughed at us. It was blasphemy.

"The Lord Himself told us that the garage must close," said Heap, who immediately wrote to BMW: "Keep this letter, because when you're standing in the dole queue looking for another job, it will help you to realise exactly how much God is in charge of everything."

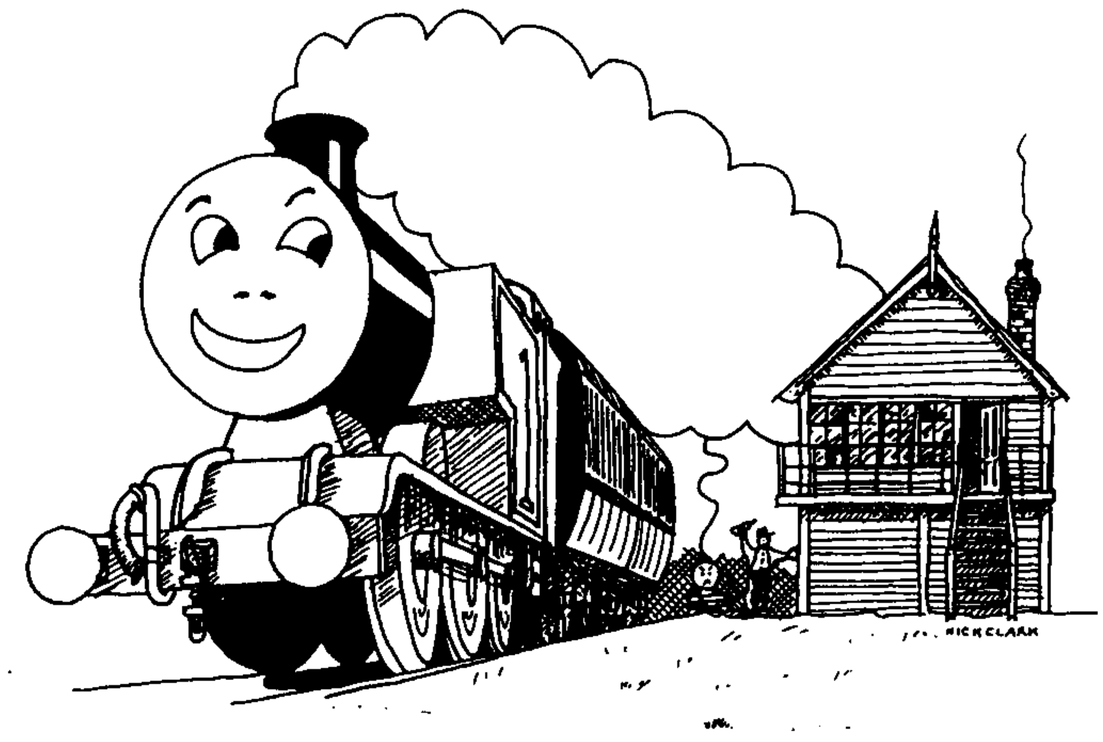
At that point, the garage manager decided to refer the entire matter to the police. *(Bucks Herald, 10/6/93. Spotter — Philip Childs)*

Compiled by
Victor Lewis-Smith

PHILIP THOMPSON

THOMAS
THE PRIVATISED TANK ENGINE

High Spirits



"IT'S not fair!" Thomas complained as he waited by a red signal at the junction. "The signalman keeps me here for five minutes every morning just so Gordon can get in front of me."

Just then, Gordon the Virgin Engine rolled past on the main line. "Poop, poop! Cheer up, little Thomas," said Gordon. "The Grey Controller has guaranteed your subsidy for three years."

"How come I have to wait for you to pass every morning?" asked Thomas.

"There's only one track, little Thomas. So we can't both run on it at the same time."

"But you pick up all my passengers at the station if you get there first."

"Thomas," sighed Gordon. "You really must learn how to enter into the spirit of open access."

Thomas's guard popped his head into the cab. "I've never known this to happen before."

"I have," said Thomas's driver. "It was common practice in Victorian times for rival companies to delay each other's trains. They used broken-down coal trains or biased signalmen."

NEXT morning Thomas's guard had a whip-round on Annie and Clarabel. The passengers gave generously when they heard of Thomas's plan.

As they reached the junction, the guard gave a whistle and discreetly handed a parcel to the signalman. Immediately, Thomas's signal changed to green.

"Peep, peep! Cheer up Gordon!" sang Thomas, as he rolled onto the main line. "Your on-board jacuzzi is guaranteed for three years."

Gordon sulked as he waited at his red signal.

"Cheers!" the signalman called after Thomas. Taking a swig from his new bottle of whisky, he said: "Here's to the spirit of open access!"

The Secret Diary of John Major aged 47¾

Monday

At last things are beginning to look up. Oh yes. Not that things have been in any way looking down. Oh no. But Mr Clarke has made in my judgement a very fine speech to some businessmen in the City, setting out our new policy for the economy, i.e. we go for growth, we keep taxes down and we continue our war against inflation. This certainly shows a refreshing change from the bad old days of Mr Lamont, and his obsession with keeping inflation down, not putting up taxes and making silly speeches about growth.

I had made a plan to go to the Test Match at Lord's today, and my wife Norman had even made me one of her special packed lunches i.e. an M&S Tuna Tikka Masala and Kumquat Danish Sandwich and an apple. She had not, however, included the customary Kit-Kat, which was not inconsiderably disappointing. But it didn't matter because Mr O'Donnell came in and told me I wasn't going to Lord's after all.

"It is not a good idea to be associated with defeat, failure and national humiliation," he said. Norman agreed, saying "No wonder the team doesn't want you there!" I think she has got the wrong end of the stick as per usual!

Tuesday

Once again the media are trying to tell me who I should have in my government. In this case it is Mr Mates who was a colonel in the army and a good friend of Mr Heseltine's. Everyone is saying that I should sack him just because he tried to interfere with the course of justice on behalf of someone who had given the Conservative Party a very considerable amount of money. Whatever the rights and wrongs of this business, I have decided to make it clear that in no circumstances whatever will I ask for the resignation of one of my most valued ministers.

When I told Sir Norma Fowler this, he gave me one of his panicky looks and said: "So you will be giving him the same 100% backing as you gave Mr Mellor and Mr Lamont?" "Exactly," I said firmly.

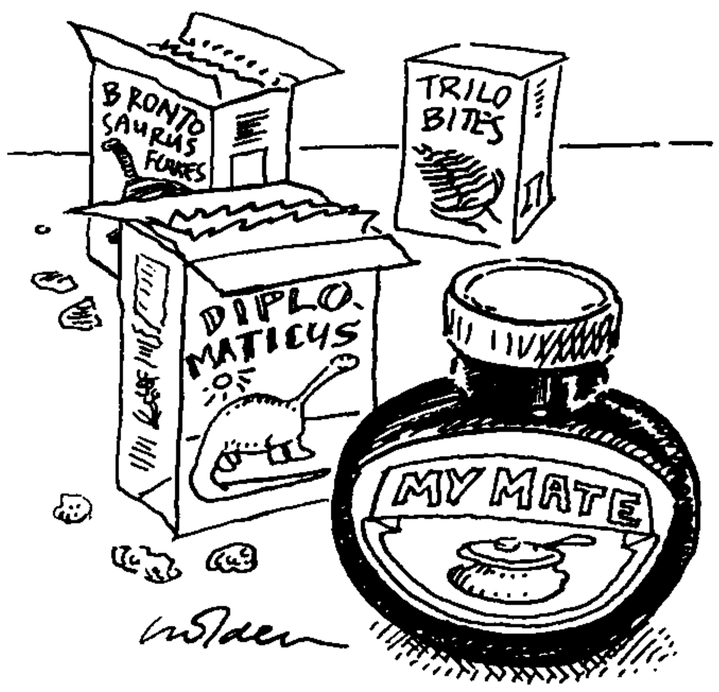
Wednesday

Very sadly Mr Mates has decided that, after a long and painful fax from me telling him that he has been sacked, he must resign. This is a serious blow, particularly to Mr Mates. But for the good of the government and the country as a whole, I have decided to accept his sacking. It is certainly tough at the top, though not so tough as it is just below the top!

When we were having our breakfast Norman said: "I see you have lost another of your Mates."

"I do not think that is amusing," I told her, "particulary as I have just read in the Daily Telegraph that Mr Heseltine has had a not inconsiderably serious heart attack in Venice, which is in Italy. That means that I have lost three ministers in a fortnight. It is true what Shakespeare said, that when bad things happen, they come in threes."

"Like Mates," said Norman, as she continued to munch her Brontosaurus Flakes. I was not exactly sure what she meant.



Thursday

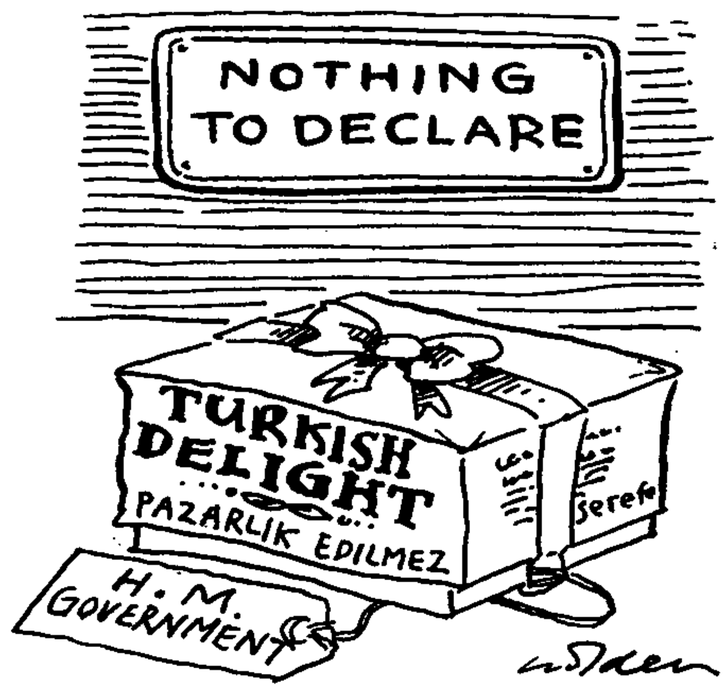
Today I had to go to a place called Copenhagen for one of our many historic Euro-Summits. How different things are from the days when Mrs Thatcher used to go there and shout at our European partners! Now they shout at me.

First it was M. Delors who does not understand the first thing about how to make economies work. Then it was Herr Kohl who has not a clue what to do about Bosnia. When we were having dinner he was so rude to me in German that I decided not to have coffee with him. That really put him in his place.

I cannot wait to get back to the House of Commons to tell them about my triumph.

Friday

It is not inconsiderably irritating when you have enjoyed a historic diplomatic triumph to find that everyone is only concerned with some quite silly and unimportant issue such as whether the Conservative Party should have accepted so much money at the last election from foreign crooks. I am glad to say that Sir Norma has come up with a brilliant defence. Every time the Labour Party asks about the millions of pounds we were given by



the crooks, we all shout "Maxwell!". This always works, even when they say, "At least we declared it!"

Saturday

This silly secrecy business is continuing to cloud my triumph over Herr Kohl and the coffee. Luckily Sir Norma has come up with a new brilliant idea, which is to say to the Labour Party: "We have to keep the names of all the people who give us money secret, or else people would know that they are crooks."

"By the way," I asked, "is it true, what it says in the Guardian, that we have taken millions of pounds in cash from the Arabs?"

"Yes," said Sir Norma, "it's all being guarded outside." He pointed through the window to a van which had written on the side "Group 4 — Mr Fowler Makes Exceedingly Safe Vans".

Sunday

After not an inconsiderable deliberation, I have decided that the Mates affair is now definitely over and we will not be discussing it any more.

Mr Mates rang me up to say he was working on his resignation speech. "I hope you're not offended by what I say," he said. "On the contrary," I said. "It is very kind of you to take the trouble to ring me up." It is a great pity that I have lost Mr Mates. He is certainly an officer and gentleman.

Later Mr Clinton rang me up to say that he had bombed Iraq for making an unsuccessful attempt to kill Mr Bush. "Did you kill Mr Hussein?" I asked. "No, we missed." "Then you are all square" was my, in my judgement, not inconsiderably astute observation.

Monday

Mr O'Donnell, my press secretary, is telling everybody that he wishes to resign. The sooner the better was my immediate thought.

It is his job to make me popular but every day there are stories saying that I am not fit to do my job.

When he goes I will give the job to someone who can at least give the papers some stories about how good I am at running the country.

HESELTINE GETS REPRIEVE

by Our Industrial Staff **Alan Coronary**

IN A dramatic U-turn yesterday, Death (the President of the Board of Grim Reaping) gave Heseltine a last chance after threatening to close him down for good.

The disputed Heseltine had been described by critics as "unproductive" and "without a long-term future" and Death had put him on the infamous "Hit List".

But yesterday, after considering alternative options (including the comparative uselessness of the rest of the Cabinet), Dezza, as he is affectionately known, decided there was no option but to keep Heseltine going.

"This is a temporary measure," he warned, "and I will be reviewing the situation periodically."

Heart Attacks

A Doctor writes

AS a doctor, I am often asked: "Doctor, will you write an 800-word piece about heart attacks?" The answer is, of course, "Yes".

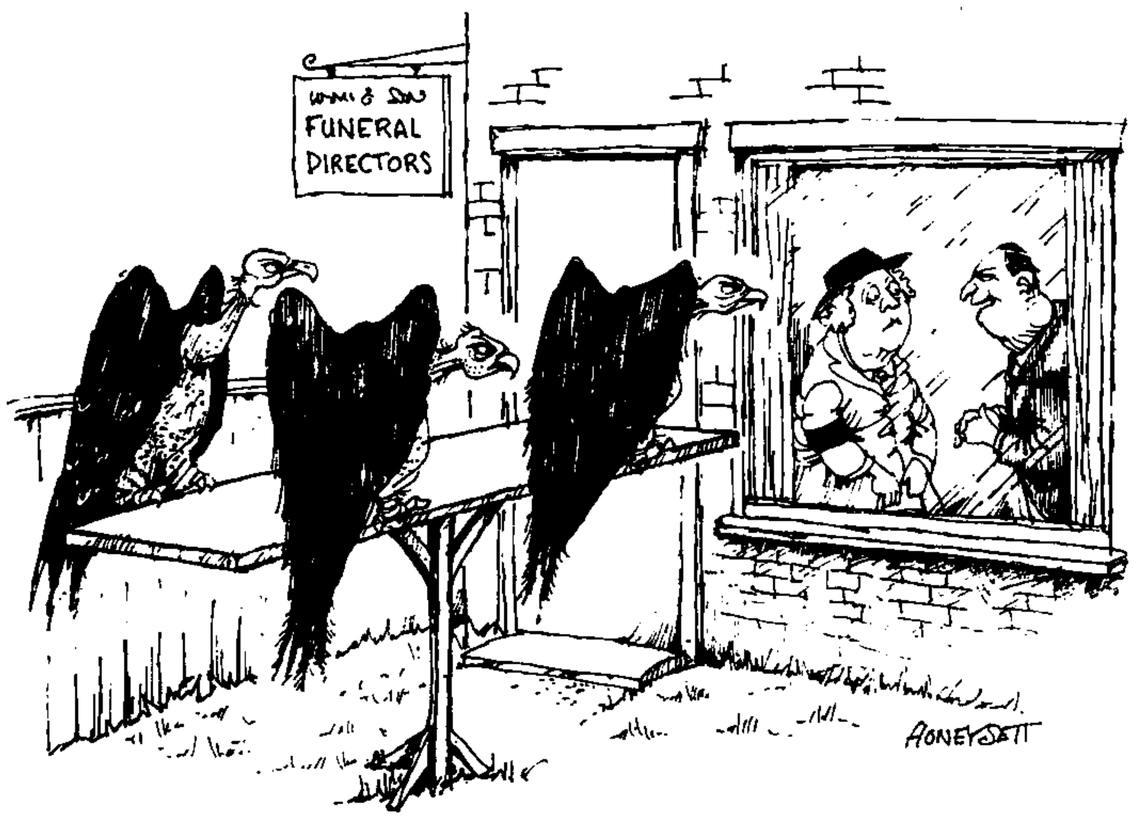
What happens is that the night editor rings up at the last minute saying someone famous had a heart attack and offers you £120. He usually says: "Don't worry — we'll fill the rest of the page with a big diagram."

As soon as this has happened the Doctor must consult the *Reader's Digest Home Medicine Guide* and surgically cut out the section on coronary disease.

This is known to professionals as a routine scissors 'n' paste job or *Hackitoutus normalis*, to give it the full medical name.

If you think you might have a hole-in-the-newspaper you should immediately seek professional advice. *(Is this enough?)*

© *A. Doctor*



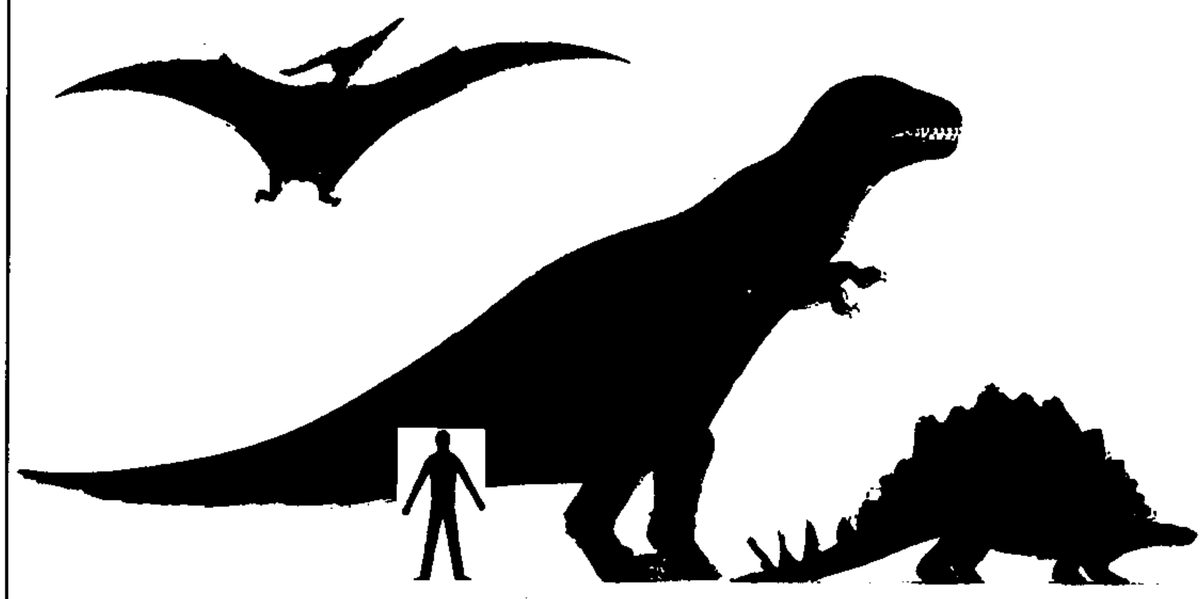
"We do, however, have an alternative to burial or cremation"

Yes! It's New Age Traveller Rhyming Slang!

"Honey, I'm home high!"

New Age	**Farmers in rage**
Inner peace	**Call the police**
Glastonbury	**Expensive, very**
Love and purity	**Social Security**
Convoys	**Dope and noise**
Solstice	**All pissed**
Right to choose	**Special Brews**
Mangy dogs	**No time for bogs**
Healing field	**Sheep get killed**
Summer Fayre	**Unwashed hair**
Ring in nose	**Motorway closed**
Just relax	**No road tax**
Hippies in bus	**Not people like us**

(That's enough slang. Ed.)



Young Telegraph Guide To Those Amazing Dinosaurs!

As seen everywhere else

Here they are:

- **Tyrrificbaurus:** *Most frighteningly dull of all the Dinobaurs.*
- **Megabaurus Rigid:** *Slow, heavy, but still terrifyingly uninteresting.*
- **Supersnaurus:** *Gigantic dinobaur that rendered victims helpless by putting them to sleep.*
- **Steggeringlybaurus:** *Much as its name suggests.*
- **Pterriblydull:** *Flew through the air, but was no more interesting for it.*
- **Diplodocumentary:** *Extraordinarily boring programme on all channels about the making of Jurassic Park.*

(That's enough Dinobaurs. Ed.)

GLENDA SLAGG

Fleet Street's Number One Seedy (Shurely 'Seed'? Ed)

AGASSI!?!? Doesn't he make you sick!!?! First he shaves the hair off his chest (Ugh!!?!). Then he takes his T-shirt off on the Centre Court!?!?

What a way to behave, I ask you!?!? It might turn on some silly 16-year-olds to see the Hairless Horror a-hammin' and a-slammin' in front of Royalty but this gal's not impressed!?!? No sirree!!

Clear off, Eyetie!! Back to the US of A!!!?!

HATS OFF to Gorgeous Agazza, the guy who gives us gals game set and match for our money!?!?!

With his ponytail and hairless torso this Transatlantic tennis tornado sure blows away the cobwebs from the Old School Tie brigade who want to keep Wimbledon in the last century!!!

I say Agassi's a Gas, eh? Geddit?!?!? (No. Ed.)

DID YOU see Lady Chatterley?!? What a let-down, I ask you?!?!

Kim Wilde

Where were all the four-letter words we were lookin' forward to??!?

And when Lady C stripped off and began a-humpin' and a-bumpin' with her horny handyman I was frankly left cold!?!?

Blimey, I've seen steamier stuff on Blue Peter!!!?!

Why couldn't the BBC have given the job to Melvyn Bragg, TV's Mister Sex??!?

Now that would have been something worth videoing!!???!

SO Raine Spencer is heading for the altar with her French Romeo, Count Jean-Francois de Chambrun (let's hope I've spelt it right, Monsieur!!?!?)

I hear the Count is hot mustard when it comes to "l'Amour" by all a-Counts (Geddit?!?)

So what's new!!?! Show me a Frenchman who can keep his hands to himself and I'll sprout wings and fly!!?!

It's not too late, Raine, to say "Non" to the Garlicky Gaul with his busy fingers and little black book!?!

HERE they are, Glenda's Midsummer Munchies!!!

- **ASIL NADIR.** Gizza Polly Peck on the cheek, Baldy!! Go on!?!?
- **DUKE OF HAMILTON.** I hear he likes a drop before a drive. Come on over, Dukey, and put your foot on it!!?!? Vrrrooooooommmmm!! (Geddit?)
- **STAN GEBLER-DAVIES.** Crazy name, crazy guy!!!

Byeeeee!!!

KIDDIES' CORNER

When I was going to St Ives
I met a Prince who had no wives.
How many were going to St Ives?

ANSWER: 700 hacks going to write pieces about the new Tate Gallery at St Ives which no one else is going to because it's too far away and the building is hideous and the pictures are tenth-rate.

*** 1st Prize**

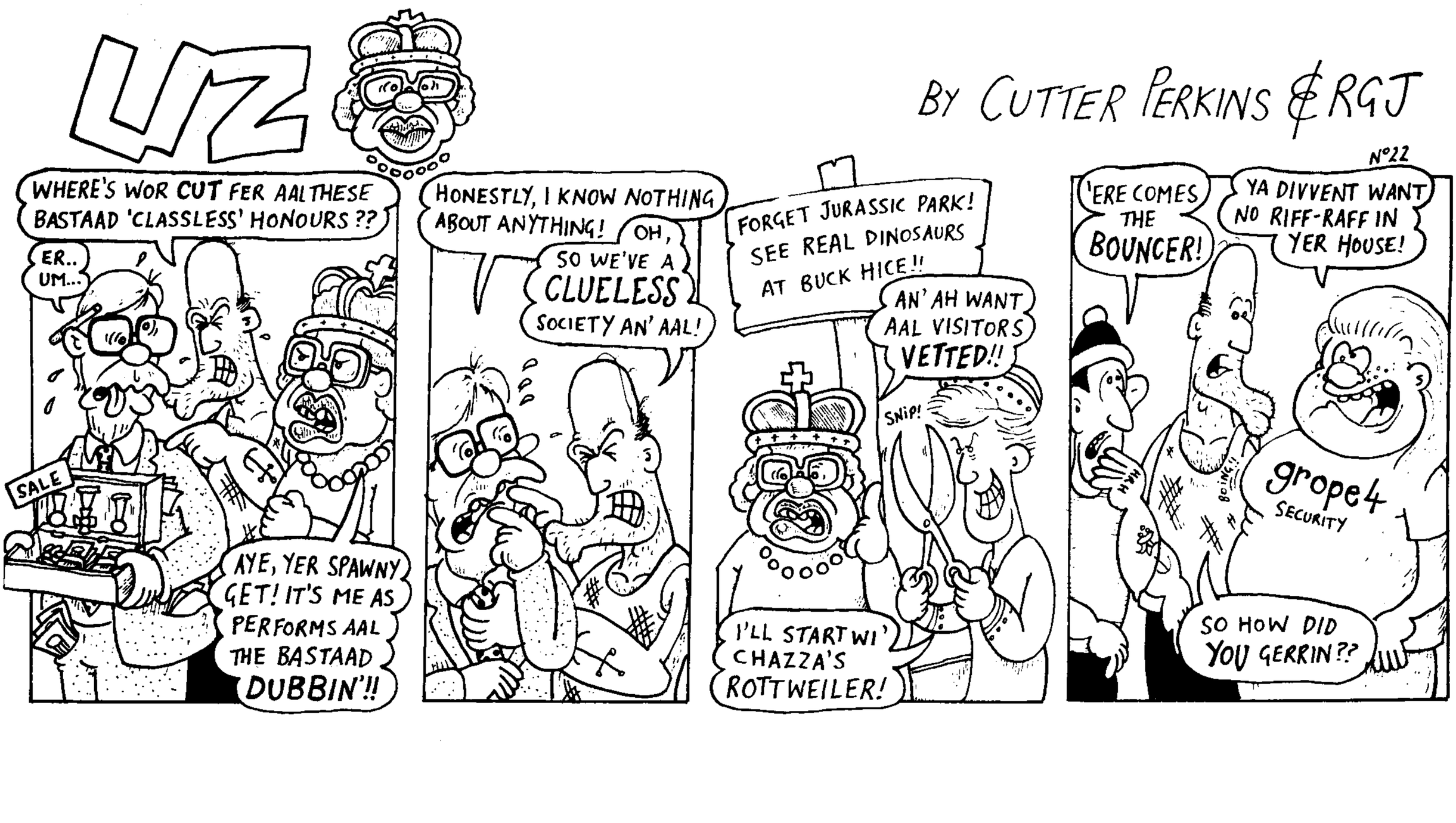
Night out with TV's Sarah Dunant

2nd Prize

2 nights out with TV's Sarah Dunant

3rd Prize

Night out with Michael Ignatieff


UZ
BY CUTTER PERKINS & RGJ
Nº22
WHERE'S WOR CUT FER AALTHESE BASTAAD 'CLASSLESS' HONOURS ??
ER.. UM...
SALE
AYE, YER SPAWNY GET! IT'S ME AS PERFORMS AAL THE BASTAAD DUBBIN'!!
HONESTLY, I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT ANYTHING!
OH, SO WE'VE A CLUELESS SOCIETY AN' AAL!
FORGET JURASSIC PARK! SEE REAL DINOSAURS AT BUCK HICE!!
AN' AH WANT AAL VISITORS VETTED!!
SNIP!
I'LL START WI' CHAZZA'S ROTTWEILER!
'ERE COMES THE BOUNCER!
YA DIVVENT WANT NO RIFF-RAFF IN YER HOUSE!
grope4 SECURITY
BOING!!
MM
SO HOW DID YOU GERRIN??

GOVERNMENT TESTS

Classical Studies

1. Read carefully the following extract from a speech to the House of Lords by Lord Tebbit of Polecat.

"There are strong grounds for looking at this in the same way as one should look at a Trojan Horse. No doubt, on that occasion, there were people who said it was a very nice horse, a gift horse, with no conditions attached to it, willed to them by those nice, kind Trojans.

[illegible] considering thi[illegible]ment, and[illegible]

Now answer the following questions:

a) What do you think the speaker meant when he suggested that the Trojans had given the horse to themselves? (1 mark)

b) Do you think Lord Tebbit was drunk? (2 marks)

c) Why do you think the Conservative Party is so keen on education? (4 marks)

English Comprehension

2. Read carefully the following statement by Mr Michael Mates.

He told reporters: "Why should I resign? I have done nothing wrong. I have the confidence of the Secretary of State and the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister has said in Copenhagen that I have his full confidence."

Asked to clarify or [illegible]

Now answer the following questions:

a) Why do you think Mr Mates was lying? (1 mark)

c) Why do you think the Conservative Party is so keen on moral education? (4 marks)

Send your answers with a donation to Conservative Central Office.

Candidates should write on one side of the cheque only.

Make payable to 'Sir Norman Fowler's English Usage'.

GAY SERIAL KILLER — KNACKER HITS BACK

by Our Crime Staff **Lunchtime O'Cruise**

INSPECTOR "Knacker of the Yard" Knacker reacted strongly today to criticism of his handling of the Gay Multiple Murder enquiry.

Homosexual pressure groups have accused Knacker of failing to investigate the series of murders "with sufficient urgency". They claim the Inspector has not committed the necessary resources or manpower to capturing "the most dangerous man in Britain".

"This is straightforward discrimination," said Peter Tosh, the director of OUTRAGEOUS RUBBISH.

Responding to the charge, Inspector Knacker said: "This is a slur on myself and my team. We do not discriminate between gay murderers or the ordinary sort. We do not catch either."

Inspector Knacker is 57.

Those new-look ITV schedules in full

3.30pm
News At Ten with Trevor Barbados.

3.45pm
Coronation Street 5½-hour Omnibus Edition.

9.00pm
Film: **Watershed Down.** Swedish "bunnies" leave their "warren" for a night of filth in Gothenburg's red-light district.

10.00pm
Nudes At Ten. All the day's nudes, without Trevor Barbados.

11.00pm
Red Hot Ken. Labour MP runs amok in nudist camp.

12.00
Uncensored highlights of the day's porn films.

8.00am
The Big Boob Breakfast Show with Eve Bollard on "the bed".

9.00am
Closedown ITV.

A NEW RANGE OF CONS FROM

Mates

The Johnny Major
THE TURKISH DELIGHT
The Blue Minister
The Freeloader
The Backhander
The Cypriot Tickler
The Naughty Wristwatch
The Attorney General
The Ex-Wife's Fancy
£400,000 for pack of lies

MATES – GOOD IN THE SACK

Poetry Corner

In Memoriam
Bernard Bresslaw

So. Farewell
Then
Bernard Bresslaw.

Star of the
"Carry On"
Films.

Now you
Are gone.

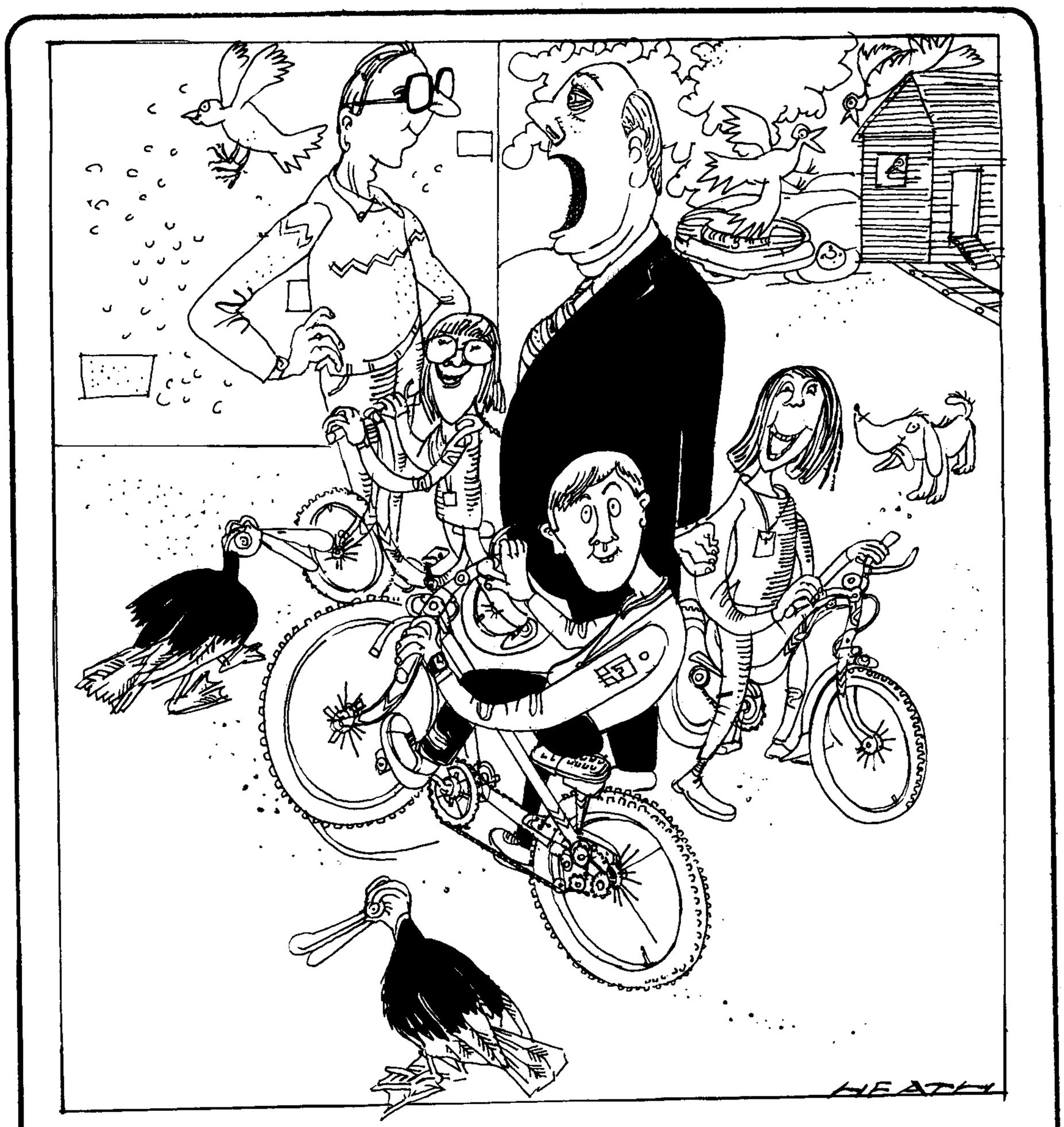
Like so many
Of your
Fellow laughter
Makers.

i.e. Sid James,
Hatty Jacques, Kenneth
Williams, Charles
Hawtree and John
Le Mesurier,

To name but
A few.

Now Barbara Windsor
Will have
To carry on
Alone.

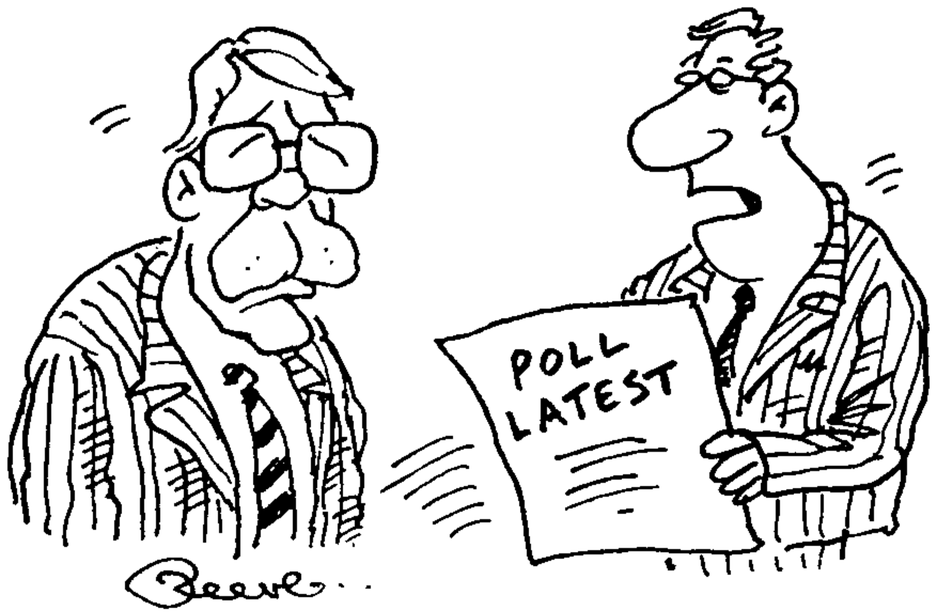
E.J. Thribb (17½)



Great Bores Of Today.

"... I got stopped the other day I must have been doing just over thirty in a 30mph zone I mean it wasn't as if I was doing anything terrible and there was no one around it must have been half eleven at night and I don't even drink I haven't had a drink since my wife died anyway they gave me the breathalyser and of course I was in the clear the whole thing must have taken at least 40 minutes and they were so unpleasant and all the time this is going on young tearaways are breaking into houses and smashing up cars with no fear of any arrest this friend of mine stopped two yobboes the other day taking his radio and there was a policeman literally standing there watching it he said they couldn't do anything because they were under twelve yet people like you and me law-abiding citizens who pay our taxes are harassed at every turn I was only doing 35 well say 40..."

I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE THOSE RAINFOREST INDIANS I CHAMPIONED HAVE BEEN CHOPPING DOWN ACRES OF TREES TO SELL TO THE WEST.
VERY DISHEARTENING FOR YOU, STING.
I'M USUALLY A GOOD JUDGE OF PEOPLE. THAT SORT OF THING DIDN'T SEEM IN THEIR NATURE. THEY'RE SIMPLE HUNTERS NOT RAPACIOUS CAPITALISTS.
THEY HAD THE MOST INCREDIBLE PRIMITIVE JUNGLE SKILLS YOU KNOW THEY COULD SPOT A MAN OR ANIMAL APPROACHING AMAZING DISTANCES AWAY.
THEY CERTAINLY SAW YOU COMING A MILE OFF, DIDN'T THEY?



"Bad news — eight out of ten cat owners hate you, too"

Wimbledon Update

PLAYERS BEAT UMPIRE

by Our Tennis Staff
Adrian Straw-Berry

BRITISH umpire Fred Bulstrode (known as "The Umpire On Whom The Sun Hasn't Yet Got A Story") was beaten to a pulp yesterday by a horde of screaming foreigners shouting obscenities and demanding more money.

At a press conference Umpire Bulstrode frankly admitted: "I thought I was holding my own until the second set, when one of them unleashed a volley of filth which I could not possibly return."

Other Wimbledon highlights yesterday included:

- **No. 1 seed Agazza stripped off to win this year's Most Hairless Chest title.**
- **An Israeli-born strawberry established a new Wimbledon record by reaching £12.56 in late trading.**
- **In the Mixed Grunge event there were few shocks as hairy-chested women demanded to compete on equal terms with Agazza.**
- **A German once again won the Looniest Fan In Crowd title by yelling threats at Ms Daili Steffigraph.**
- **Some people played tennis, but no one is very interested in that.**

New scoring system for Wimbledon

Following on-court pressure from players, the Wimbledon authorities are to update the century-old scoring system for next year's championship.

"The word 'love' has become archaic in the world of today's top-level tennis," said Brig. Sir Bilson Tilson, Wimbledon's Director of Corporate Tents. "As from next year it will be replaced by the term 'fuck' to mean no score. The scoring will therefore go 'Fuck all', '15-Fuck', '30-Fuck', 'Carter-Fuck' etc."

OWEN FLIES BACK

WAR IN OUR TIME

Both sides seem to believe that they will reach accommodation by July 15 on a proposal to open the military to homosexuals. But they are not so confident on Mr. Aspin's "bottom-up review" of the size and shape of future military forces.

International Herald Tribune

93/17/00678 St Austell Circuit Methodist Church. Removal of pipe organ, rostrum and pews. Golant/Methodist Church and Schoolroom, Cowshit Lane, **GOLANT.**

Cornish Guardian

MEET THE CLINTSTONES - THE PREHISTORIC FIRST FAMILY

BAGHDAD MISSION 100% SUCCESSFUL!
... THOUGH WE MAY HAVE BEEN A LITTLE OFF-TARGET...
THE WHITE CAVE
A LITTLE? YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO HIT BOSNIA, DUMMY!
YABBA DABBA DOLT!

ENGLAND TEAM CRUSHED AGAIN

'I stay on' says Captain

Full story p.94

LATEST SCORE

D.J. MELLOR	*legover wicket b. de Sancha*	0
N. LAMONT	*c. in Threshers b. Onanugu*	0
M. MATES	*c. Redhanded b. Nadir*	0
M. HESLETINE	*retired hurt*	0
D. HURD	*run out of ideas*	0
J. MAJOR (capt)	*not out yet but will be soon*	0
	TOTAL	**0**

NEW WORDS

with Philip Howard

GOOCH
n. pathetic figure with droopy moustache; discredited leader ***(see Major, Taylor).***

DEXTER
n. conceited little man unaware of own failings who refuses to resign. Example: "Did you know that Dexter gets £30,000 a year?" From Latin *dexter* **meaning "sinister".**

HICK
n. man of immense promise who never delivers. Example: "What a hick that Peter Jay is — did you know he gets £30,000 a week?"

McENROE
n. foul-mouthed yobbo; bad loser. From legendary Irish family the McEnroaighs, notorious for their hatred of English umpires. Example: "D'you see that bleep bleep bleep on the court? What a McEnroe!"

OLD FILMS

Near Death in Venice

Based on a story by Our Mann on the Rialto
Music by Sir Leon Brittan and Sir Michael Tebbit

(An elderly Englishman in a panama and linen suit, Lord McAlpine, wanders through the labyrinthine alleys of Venice looking for "rough trade minister". His eye lights on a beautiful blond man with blue eyes)

McAlpine: Hullo, what's your name?

Hezio: Me Tarzan, you former Vice-Chairman of Conservative Party.

McAlpine: I want to talk to you about a mutual friend.

Hezio: I must go. I cannot speak now.

(Jumps into passing gondola. Gondolier sings "Just one coronario". Cut to Lord McAlpine puffing at cigar in lobby of Hotel Cipriani)

Bellboy: Mi Lorde, there is a molto urgent message for you. From the ospedale. Your friend. Signor Hezio. 'E very sick man. He wishes you to leave him alone.

(Music: Gustav Major's Lieder von der Toryparty)

Hezio *(lying in bed):* Me Tarzan, you nurse.

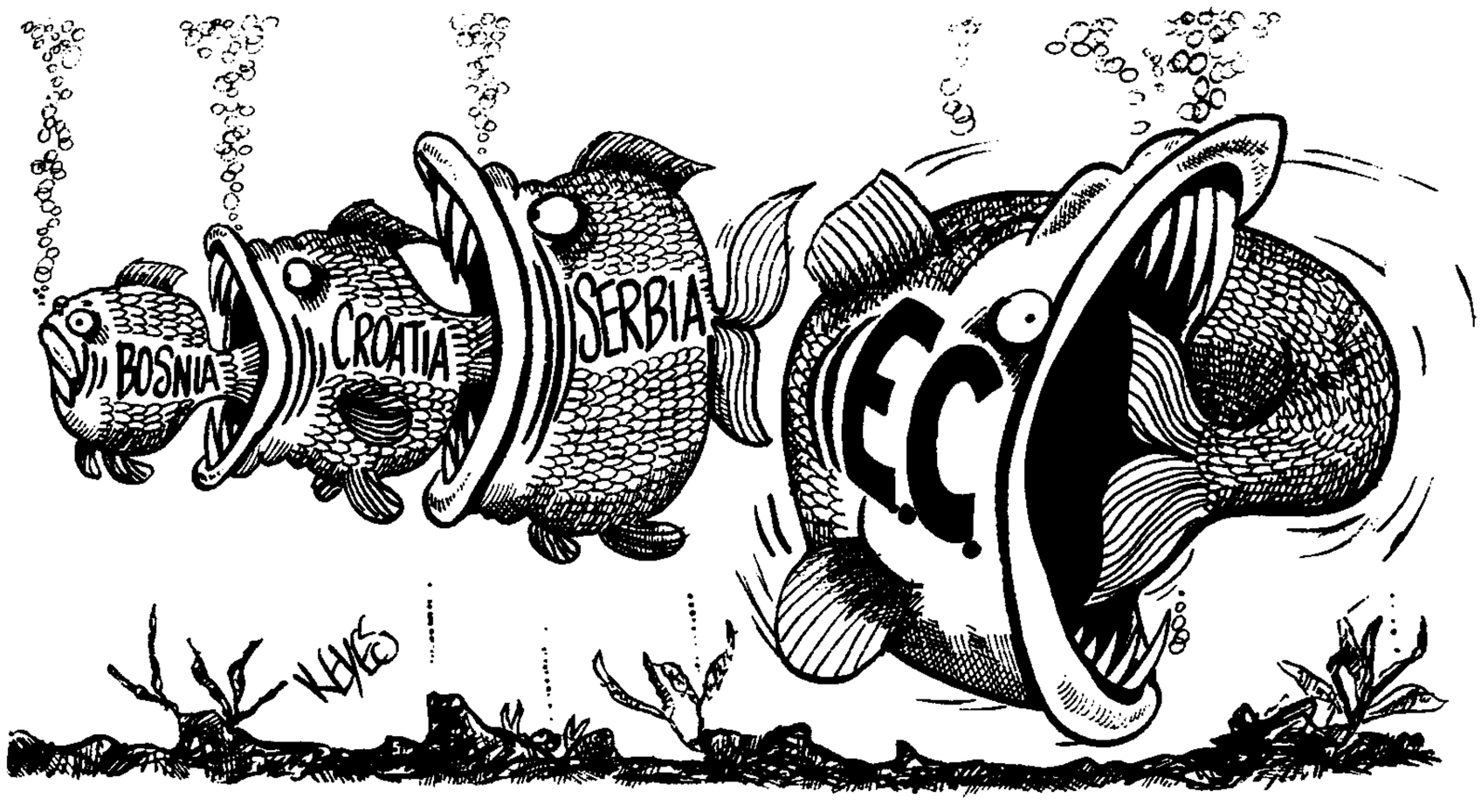
Nurse: Oh, you are a one, Hezio.

CAST IN FULL

LORDMcALPINE	Dirk Bogarde
HEZIO	Jason Donovan
MANINGONDOLA	Sir David Frost
NURSE	Barbara Windsor

Those Lloyd's Names In Full

Twit
Fool
Idiot
Gull
Sucker
Mug
Bankrupt



Notes & Queries

QUESTION: Why do telephones ring?

☐ THE first telephone did not in fact ring, but made a knocking sound like someone at the door.

This proved a costly mistake for the inventors, the Scottish-Italian Mario Brothers, whose patent Knock-Knock Automatic Speech Conveying Machine failed to catch on with the public. Customers found that they would more often than not go to open the door rather than pick up the receiver. Or they would pick up the receiver while their guests waited outside the front door. The Mario Brothers went into liquidation and their invention was swiftly superseded by the "ringing" phone which has now become standard throughout the world.

Readers might be interested to know that there is a prototype of the Knock-Knock phone in the Kunst Moderna Telefonische Haus in Steffenfreiburg. It is open daily from June until October and then on weekends and public holidays throughout the winter. — *S.R.B. Binswell, Regional Sub-Manager (Sales), British Telecom, Hay-on-Wye.*

QUESTION: I have recently read that Queen Elizabeth I was a man. Is this true?

☐ AMERICAN scholars now believe that the reason Queen Elizabeth I never married was that she was in fact history's most successful transvestite. Recent laser analysis of the famous Helmington portrait of the Virgin Queen shows that the facial bone structure, shoulder width and head size are quite irrefutably male. In addition, historical costume experts agree that the Queen's flamboyant dress sense and preoccupation with adornment (see letters of Sir Phillip Sidney, ed. B. Blümengrümen, Cornell University Press) are more in keeping with a tradition of sexual cross-dressing than in feminine role focusing. It is quite likely in the light of this evidence that much of the intrigue at the Elizabethan court centred on the suspicion that the monarch was in fact a king. Mary Queen of Scots probably discovered this secret and was attempting to blackmail her cousin — a strategy that resulted in her execution. — Professor Danielle LaRoux, University of Las Vegas.

QUESTION: Why is water wet?

☐ DR F.M. Wainwright only answers half of the question in his reply of 12.4.93 to G.L.R. Gromes' original query. What Wainwright fails to include is any coherent definition of viscosity and thus the Doctor, like so many of his Cambridge contemporaries, falls into the trap of confusing traditional aquadynamics with subjective concepts like sensory perception. The wetness is germane not to water but to our relation to *(That's enough of this — Ed.)*

NEXT WEEK: Answers please for the following. Does wearing a hat make you bald? Can eggs feel pain? Why are spoons so called? Does anyone read *The Economist*?

That Mandy Smith Wedding Menu in full

To start
Nothing
or
Glass of Water
— ❋ —

Main Course
Stick of Celery
or
Nothing
— ❋ —

From the Trolley
Glass of Water
or
Cigarette
— ❋ —

To Follow
Nothing

NO NUTRIENTS ON FILE
BURGERKING MANCHESTER
TO GO #27
WHOPPER CHEESE 2.09

Flies Man dies

A Tribute by Sir Anthony Burgess OM

MANY people believe that the late William Golding was the greatest English novelist of our time. Undoubtedly Golding showed flashes of promise, but his output was not sufficient to justify any claim that he was the greatest writer of our day. Only a novelist who has produced as many books as, say, myself can truly be called our greatest novelist.

Even his most famous book, *Lord of the Rings*, which tackled the subject of original sin, was only a pale forerunner of that much more substantial exploration of the same theme *A Clockwork Orange*, which also incidentally translated much more effectively to the cinema screen.

Sir William did of course win the Nobel Prize, which was more than could be said of the over-rated Graham Greene. Neither of them merited such an honour, which should rightly have gone, as everyone agreed, to that towering figure, myself.

Sound Bites

Quotes of the Week

■ Heseltine has Heart Attack.
Headline, Banbury Evening News

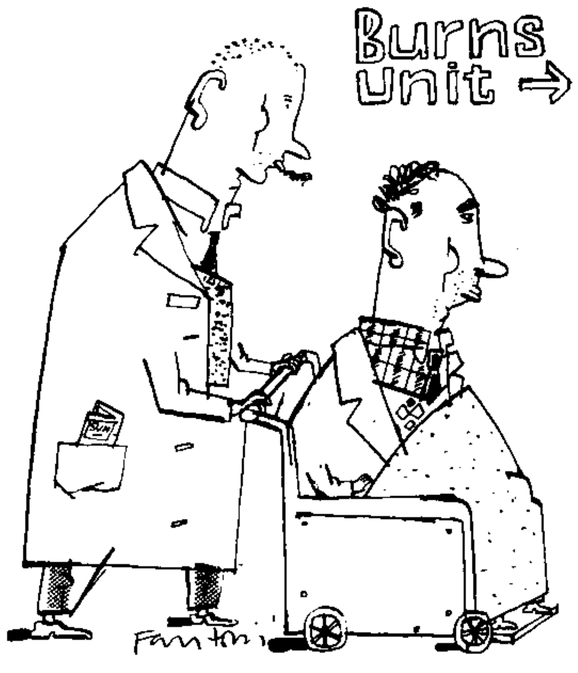
■ We do not anticipate the extra security arrangements interfering with the normal course of play.
Major R.L. Price-Jones, Wimbledon Club official

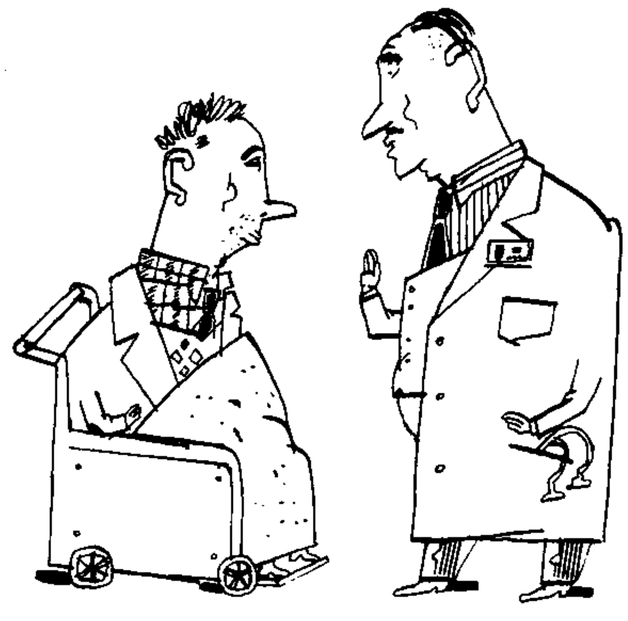
■ I enjoyed working on the film.
Sherilyn Fenn, star of 'Boxing Helena'

■ The situation in Bosnia is deteriorating.
Shavez Vinquist, Deputy Assistant Commissioner, UN Overseas Directorate

■ I like going to Lord's.
Tim Rice

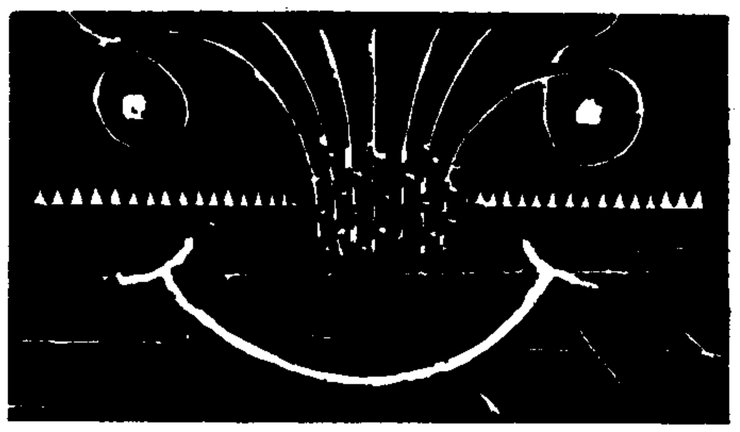
(That's enough dull quotes — Ed.)





"Wee, sleekit, cow'rin', tim'rous beastie..."

DIARY



KEN RUSSELL

Creative? My God — My Hitler! My Nymphomaniac Nun! — I'm creative, you bet I am! My whole body tingles with wild, free, exciting — ***controversial!*** — artistic vision morning, noon and night. Let me stab you through the eyes with an example. This morning, I was all set to brush my teeth, but just as I was squeezing the tube and the toothpaste was oozing out, I thought, My God, it's like Rimsky-Korsakov's penis! You see, that's the way my amazing, brilliant — ***and sometimes controversial!*** — mind works, it's just so full of extraordinary visions and weird insights you just simply wouldn't believe it!

Of course, the genuine artist in our society has never been understood in his lifetime, and that's why my film of *Lady Chatterley* is arousing such a vindictive, hate-filled response from the bastard (does that shock you? does it? well, I'll repeat it then: ***bastard!***) critics. Well, if that puts me in a line with Van Gogh (Phil Collins), Mozart (Roger Tonge) and Liszt (Roger Daltrey) then so be it, I'm delighted I can add my extra lustre to their reputations. If people can't understand me, then that's a price worth paying for being one of the world's great visionaries — and you know, sometimes I can't even understand myself, my mind's so endlessly inventive, so soaked by the semen of creativity!

At the moment, I'm composing my next project, a screen version of The Life of James Last, the brilliant — ***controversial!*** — and hopelessly misunderstood Scandinavian orchestral leader who lived for his music as no other man had ever done and sweated blood to conjure up his own mad and incredible vision of things. I've called it — ***controversially!*** — *Lastomania!* and it opens on the Golden Gate Bridge, transposed to the Swiss Fjords, where James Last — played by Oliver Reed — is practising frantically with his baton as the rain thunders down in loud guitar-bursts:

Mrs Last: Oh James, James, James! Have you not suffered enough? Must you always live for music! music! music! and nothing else? Let us to bed!

(Mrs Last removes her leather one-piece costume decked out in swastikas. Beneath it is another leather one-piece costume decked out in swastikas)

Mrs Last: Take me, maestro!

James Last *(pulling out a thirty-foot high phallic symbol, dousing it with petrol and setting fire to it):* Not now, dear! Before the dawn cometh, I must, must, must finish my new work, "Non- Stop- Party- Hits- A- Go-Go Volume 10" or my very creative juices will fail me and I will shrivel to nothing! Art is torture!

Mrs Last: Your music is a hymn to nature, sure enough, James Last. But what about me? Do I not have my own needs and desires, husband? You may have conquered the world of easy listening, James — but still you cannot conquer your own wife!

(Mrs Last erupts in a mad cackle. She strips off and dives naked into the Fjord, which becomes awash with the bodies of dead nuns. Choking on her own vomit, she struggles desperately and drowns. The stirring soundtrack is — poignantly — Last's own version of 'Would You Like To Fly (In My Beautiful Balloon)?')

James Last: Did you say something, dear? You see, like many mad and crazy artists, I sometimes become so involved in the act of creation that I am prone to neglect those around me. But at least the new album will be arranged by tomorrow, and that's the main thing, eh dear? Dear? Dear? *(Suddenly he realises that his wife is floating face down beneath the bodies of dead nuns)* Oh my God! What have I done for my art?

Not a bad scene-setter, eh? By a series of subtle hints and juxtapositions, with here a clever metaphor and there a suggestive symbol, I introduce the viewer to the massive torments and contradictions in the paradoxical character of James Last — his passionate love of music coupled with his inability to reach out beyond fantasy into a darker reality. By the end of the first scene, he has composed his next album, his wife has drowned and his penis has been set on fire. And then things really start happening. Incidentally, we're hoping to get that superb young actress Hetty Baines to play Mrs Last — fingers crossed!

My wife — that superb young actress Hetty Baines — tells me I'm a bit of an *enfant terrible*. I'm certainly not denying that I'm not frightened to shock. All great artists have felt the need to shock their public into seeing the world with fresh and terrified eyes. Why else would Constable paint a field of dildoes to the left of Flatford Mill? (*see my acclaimed biopic "Constable!" (1973)*) And why else would Sir Edward Elgar have written his celebrated "Cello Concerto for Nuns and Nazis"? (*"IncredibElgar!" (1984)*) And why else would Virginia Woolf have smeared herself in lard and danced naked in Nazi jackboots on the top of the Eiffel Tower? (*"Woolfomania!" (1991)*) Shocking? Well, perhaps life and art — and genius — are all shocking. But apologise for my genius before a drab, grey, philistine world? Sorry: no can do. I'd rather die in poverty, skeletal, starving, and diseased, rejected by an unthinking world that doesn't understand me, faithful to the very end to the vision of my genius, just like Shakespeare did.

After *Lastomania!* (see above), I'm embarking on a strikingly new four-part production for BBC/TV called *Janie!*, a film-portrait of Jane Austen. I aim to explore the side of her character that has long been unduly neglected, the side of her character that was sex-crazed and sado-masochistic and obsessed with firearms, leather gear, whips, fire and fast cars.

The first episode opens with the young Jane — played, if we can get her, by that superb young actress, Hetty Baines — clad only in her famous rubber bikini, driving up to Hitler's Berlin bunker in her Austin (witty touch) before mass-murdering over five hundred nuns to the tune of "Edelweiss". This will go a long way, I think, towards unlocking the secret of the artistic genius who wrote such undoubted masterpieces as *Emma!*, *Rebecca!* and *Wuthering Heights!* Ken Russell gets it together with Jane Austen — that sounds to me like a terrific recipe for art, for passion, and — let's face it — for maybe just a smidgin of ***controversy!!!***

PHILIP LARKIN-
a hidden life

Larkin's authorised Biographer ***Andrew Motion*** and his editor ***Anthony Thwaite*** discuss the impact of Selected Letters of ***Philip Larkin*** with distinguished Birmingham playwright ***David Edgar.***
(Monday May 31st, **mac** 7.30pm)

Birmingham Readers & Writers Festival Advertisement

"I warned you this would happen, Fanshaw — the porters have started playing silly buggers with the sloth"

Literary Review

Blockhead busters

The Night Manager
John le Carré
(Hodder, £15.99)
Honour Among Thieves
Jeffrey Archer
(HarperCollins, £14.99)

HOW HARD is it to produce a bestseller? Here we have the big boys' books of the summer, both designed to flow smoothly out of the airport bookshops, as the once-a-year hardback purchase of reluctant readers.

They're similarly packaged, identical in size and feel. Both have a martial image on the cover — a knight with a spear on the le Carré, a ceremonial sword on the Archer. Both are the required length, a little over 400 pages. Both have titles echoing previous titles by their authors — such as *First Among Equals* for Archer, and *The Secret Pilgrim* for le Carré — to facilitate product recognition among their dopey customers.

Both, too, are cried up in exactly the same way in the blurb. First comes the beginnings of a plot summary, then the closing pitch. "In *The Night Manager* le Carré has given us his best novel to date: a story of majestic reach, funny, sad, captivating and constantly thrilling..." "In *Honour Among Thieves* Jeffrey Archer has created a novel of intrigue and passion..."

Easy, then, is it, bestseller production? Unfortunately, *tragically*, somebody still has to choose and arrange the words which fill up the inside. The publishers would obviously rather avoid this expensive and unreliable section of the manufacturing process. Many disappointed readers would probably prefer it too. But there — we just don't have the technology yet. Sure enough, in their different ways both authors duly botch the job.

Archer's defects are the less interesting. He is simply too thick, too devoid of normal human responses, to write an adequate thriller. The most exciting thing about *Honour Among Thieves* is just how stupid it is.

The plot is quite hair-raisingly crass. Saddam Hussein wants to get at President Clinton. So he pays some criminals to steal him the American Declaration of Independence and leave a fake in its place, so he can spitefully burn the original live on television! The hero, a Yale prof (Archer *still* wishes he had really gone to university) and amateur spy, goes to Baghdad to get it back, along with the love interest, an Israeli agent and, phwoar, former model.

At the end, it is revealed that Saddam's copy is a fake too, and the real one is therefore perfectly safe. This revelation has, in fact, been excruciatingly obvious to any reader of normal intelligence since page 84, but Archer evidently considers it one of those "twists in the tale" that only an absolutely top-notch master storyteller, such as himself, can hope to pull off. He really, truly doesn't know any better.

The Archer prose, meanwhile, remains as moronically inept at delivering the necessary information as ever. A typical sentence: "As the plane lifted off from Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion airport for Heathrow, Hannah pondered once again what had caused a twenty-five-year-old woman at the height of her career as a model" (hard to credit, I know, but it is herself she's supposed to be thinking of) "to want to apply to join the Institute for Intelligence and Special Tasks — better known as Mossad — when she could have had her pick of rich husbands in a dozen capitals." It would be hard to devise a single sentence that could more concisely demonstrate its author's incurable incompetence as a novelist.

It is often rumoured that Jeffrey Archer does not write his own books. This is obviously not true because they would be so much better if he didn't. As it is, the personal touch, that dead hand, shows through everywhere. The only smart thing about *Honour Among Thieves* is that it is set in the United States. This is because America is a bigger country and so there are more people there who may be dumb enough to buy it. Perhaps Archer had professional advice to this effect?

Le Carré, in comparison, is a literary whiz. But he too spoils the product, not through incapacity but sentimentality. In *The Night Manager* he has once more worked through his obsessions with class, infidelity, male masochism and the enslaving attractions of young women. The fact that he now has to do without the cold war as a theme has made no difference at all: the books always were about his own compulsions anyway.

The Night Manager reworks characters introduced in *The Secret Pilgrim*. A fine young man (close combat expert, etc.) has inadvertently betrayed his lover. After her death, he is offered the opportunity to redeem himself by becoming an undercover agent, spying on "the worst man in the world", an arms dealer and drug merchant who lives in the Bahamas. While doing this, he becomes infatuated with the dealer's girlfriend, young, beautiful, equestrian, innocent, lovely nipples, etc. Inevitably, the hero is himself betrayed by the cads back at base in London. But, no less inevitably, after prolonged tortures, heroically withstood, he gets the girl and escapes.

This perfectly good, if standard issue, story is made insufferable by le Carré's pitiful crooning about the girl, "Jed". The way she knows "how to do that with your hips when you walk", her "unsupported breasts", her "long waist", "the satin planes of her back", "the surprising sharpness of her athletic shoulders, which were the tomboy bits of her", "the white underneath to her arms and the flow of her hips as she rode", her "endless" not to mention her "baby-pink" legs, and "her skin all one soft tan" notwithstanding.

But this character with whom le Carré is so besotted never has any reality whatsoever (few erotic fantasies do). Far from operating as a prime motive for the story, the character wrecks it, and the narrative disintegrates. The reader becomes embarrassed to eavesdrop this privy pornography, especially since le Carré has tried to make this absurd female represent the solution to all his hero's pain and insecurity.

But there you are, boys will be boys — not that Archer shows any signs of ever having been anything so lifelike. Hatched from an egg, perhaps?

BOOKS & BOOKMEN

☐ ONE OF THIS year's Booker prize judges, Nicholas Clee (*Who Clee? Ed.*) works for the *Bookseller* as a reporter. He achieved a scoopette two weeks ago revealing that this year new novels by previous winners (hiya Anita!) or shortlisted authors could automatically be entered in addition to the maximum of three titles from any one imprint.

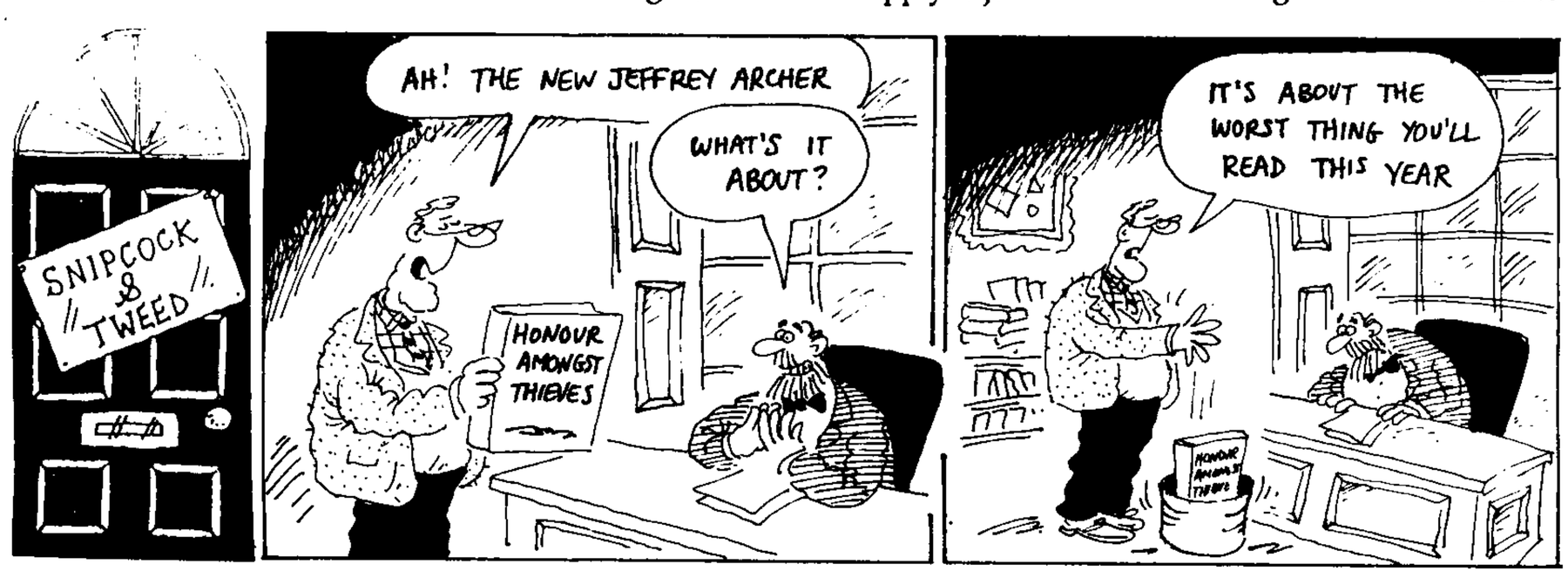
As it is publishers already submit far too many titles for the prize, and each year the long-suffering judges have to read more than 100 novels, most of them shamefully mediocre or third-rate. This year, although the judges led by the Earl of Gowrie were not told this when they agreed to serve, they will have to read a dozen extra titles by previous shortlisted winners with new books out.

The first the judges knew of this was when they read it in the *Times*, and administrator Martyn "Almighty" Goff had had quite a time calming everybody down, including Baroness James (aka P.D. James). The real beneficiaries are the publishers, further relieved of the embarrassment of taking a view as to which of their novels are better than others.

Who was responsible for pushing the change in the rules through? Step forward Peter "Eeyore" Straus, who is a member of the Booker management committee and happens to be a publisher.

● *EARLY prediction for the Booker shortlist: Roddy Doyle, Brian Moore, David Malouf, Vikram Seth, Upamanyu Chatterjee plus unidentified woman novelist.*

'Bookworm'


SNIPCOCK & TWEED
AH! THE NEW JEFFREY ARCHER
WHAT'S IT ABOUT?
HONOUR AMONGST THIEVES
IT'S ABOUT THE WORST THING YOU'LL READ THIS YEAR

In the City

AS THE unsavoury list of the great and far from good at home and abroad who funded the Tories during the Thatcher years grows, one name so far strangely missing is that of Mohammed Fayed, the phoney Pharoah of Harrods.

The man dubbed a liar by department of trade and industry inspectors and accused of deceiving the authorities over his wealth and the source of funding for the 1985 Harrods takeover liked to boast of his "influence" with the Tories.

And influence he certainly seemed to have as the Thatcher government first facilitated his takeover of House of Fraser, then for two years resisted appointing DTI inspectors, and finally, when they found Fayed guilty, refused to take any action.

But then reports circulating among sources close to the Thatcher circle suggest Fayed could have donated as much as £500,000 to the Conservative party. Such chunky donations buy a lot of favours, as Octav Botnar discovered, but his fellow fugitive Asil Nadir did not.

Fayed's link to the Tories was his PR adviser "Sir" Gordon Reece, a Thatcher favourite who shared an office with party treasurer Lord McAlpine. Fayed is understood to have met both McAlpine and his shortlived successor Lord Beaverbrook. Fayed was also on close terms with Tory MP Sir Peter Hordern and influential peer Lord Fanshawe (former MP Anthony Royle). One of his most avid advocates was Tim Smith, the Tory MP who is now joint treasurer. Fayed was also more than close to that other Tory supporter, the Sultan of Brunei.

Certainly, like Nadir and Abdul Shamji, another sleazy Tory benefactor spotlighted by the *Eye* along with accused insider dealer Li Ka-Shing, Fayed knows the way to get what you want. He learned by acting as the bagman for Mahdi Al-Tajir, who fronted for the ruler of Dubai. You look after the leader, and the leader looks after you.

Ironically Fayed's arch-enemy "Tiny" Rowland, the man accused of bribing every African leader south of the Sahara, believes it was his failure to open his chequebook to the Tories which cost him Harrods.

In 1980 he was invited to Sunday lunch at Chequers with Mrs Thatcher. A friendly discussion about British policy in Africa ensued. At the end his companion, Sir Edward du Cann, Lonrho director and chairman of the party's 1922 Committee, whispered that a cheque for £100,000 to £150,000 was considered appropriate after such audiences with the Leaderene. Once paid, Rowland was assured by du Cann, Lonrho's proposed controversial bid for House of Fraser would be waved through by the government. Rowland did not believe him and so did not pay. He did not get Harrods but the man who paid did.

ASILZHEIMER'S Disease appears to be striking down an increasing number of senior Tories. It is hoped that Michael Heseltine's Venice meeting with a fellow but much more serious sufferer, Lord McAlpine, did not bring on his heart attack. Hopefully, Heseltine's speedy recovery will not be prevented either by Asil's absurd memories of past meetings or by gossip about any possible benefits his Haymarket Press group's interests in local radio (always disclosed) will receive when new licences are granted by the government.

MICHAEL MATES believes there was a plot to first destabilize and then persecute (sorry) prosecute his hero Asil Nadir. Why otherwise did he do so much for the runaway ingrate?

The plotters were presumably the usual suspects — the Greek Cypriots, MI6, the Inland Revenue, the Serious Fraud Office and anti-Nadir journalists.

The problem is that not only is evidence of a plot somewhat thin outside Nadir's paranoid imagination, but it is defied by the internal reasons for the collapse of Polly Peck which Mates seems to fail to understand or, like Nadir, simply ignore.

For much of the period up to the collapse of Polly Peck in 1990 the Greek Cypriots, while wishing to see Nadir's downfall — as the mainstay of the Turkish Cypriot economy — and telling everyone that he was a crook, had none of the proof which emerged as a result of the Inland Revenue or SFO investigations.

Furthermore, far from Nadir being seen as an obstacle to a settlement of the Cyprus issue, he was considered by the Americans at least as a possible solution. Turkish Cypriot sources recall rumours that Nadir was being encouraged to stand as president against his ally and now protector Rauf Denktash. The Americans figured that as he was a businessman and the then Greek Cypriot president Vassiliou was a businessman they could do business. An alerted Denktash nipped that plan in the bud.

The plot also assumes, as mouthpiece Mates happily seems to do, that Polly Peck was a sound business brought down by vested interests. How to explain therefore the three figure million black hole in Cyprus and Turkey into which 20,000 shareholders disappeared? The £900 million of assets which may never realise more than £100 million? The more than £200 million supposedly invested in leisure developments that were never developed? The £200 million in local banks that was never there?

Polly Peck collapsed leaving creditors with a few pennies in the pound not because of any plot or Revenue investigation or SFO raid but because the assets and profits in Cyprus and Turkey were always overstated by hiding the impact of the ever diminishing Turkish lira and by the constant syphoning off of millions by Nadir to support the Polly Peck share price and pay for his private empire. When the music stopped in 1990 the house fell down because it was only ever a mirage maintained by new money pumped in from shareholders and bankers.

Another crucial aspect of the plot theory is that the SFO case was weak and on the point of collapse, as proved by the reduction in the charges Nadir faced from 66 involving £150 million in 1991 to 13 involving £30 million when he ran away.

What this ignores is that it is normal for fraud defendants to face many more charges on committal than at trial (cf Guinness and Roger Levitt) and that the trial judge had made it clear from the start that he only wanted a much smaller number, perhaps only six. Furthermore, the 46 charges which were dismissed on legal grounds at one stage were all later restored as a result of a law lords ruling in a separate case. So the SFO was able to pick what it saw as its best 13 shots from a still remaining 66, it never being intended that Nadir should be tried on so many charges. But then facts are rarely as interesting as conspiracies.

I WAS UNFAIR to personal finance writer Lorna Bourke in the last *Eye* when criticising the puffing of Johnson Fry's Utilities Trust in her *Sunday Telegraph* column of 23 May while participating in its promotion to financial advisers. I omitted to point out that a large ad for the self same Utilities Trust appeared in the *Sunday Telegraph* on 13 June. Merely a coincidence.

BRITISH Airways shareholders later this month will get their first opportunity to question new chairman Sir Colin Marshall about the Virgin affair. One matter they might feel worth pursuing is Marshall's own dealings with his longtime adviser, the late Michael Levin, who worked as a BA consultant until 1989 from an office next to Marshall's, and Levin's role in the anti-Virgin campaign.

Levin left under a cloud after he was named in a sexual harassment case by a BA female employee in New York and was forced out by Marshall's predecessor, Lord King. BA had to settle the $5 million claim. Shareholders might inquire whether Levin paid anything.

They might also press for clarification of Levin's role as a source of anti-BA information to newspapers who supported the Virgin cause and his possible links to the well informed "mole" whose regular leaks bedevilled King for years.

Branson's notebooks disclosed conversations with journalists who had been given damaging information by Levin about the anti-Virgin campaign implicating King but not Marshall. It also emerged that Marshall continued to be in contact with Levin after he was sacked.

Given that Marshall denies any knowledge of the anti-Virgin "dirty tricks", perhaps shareholders should ask whether he ever discussed Virgin with his longtime adviser who was an early supporter of the "stop Branson" campaign.

'Slicker'

WHY IS LEGAL AID BEING DENIED TO 14 MILLION PEOPLE?
NADIR GETS £1 MILLION LEGAL AID
BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T CONTRIBUTE TO TORY PARTY FUNDS!
John Kent

footnotes

Lloydy Luck

IT IS NOW just over a year since the prime minister's historic visit to the United States in which he accomplished a most desperate mission: to save Lloyd's of London from the prying eyes of US government investigators.

During his visit — in the first week of June last year — John Major beseeched President Bush to stop the burgeoning investigations by US government agencies into Lloyd's. For nearly a year the securities exchange commission (SEC) had been investigating Lloyd's manic recruitment of investors in the US during the boom years of the 1980s.

Lloyd's was protected during the recruitment by its long-standing exemption from strict US laws governing the issue of securities. Was the exemption legal, especially for the recruitment of "unsophisticated" investors (ie investors who have at their disposal less than $1 million)? And if the exemption was not legal, what was to stop hundreds of American "names" recruited to Lloyd's syndicates which have now been stung by massive claims over asbestosis and pollution from suing Lloyd's for the reimbursement of their losses?

These were the questions being asked by the grim-faced men from the SEC, and others even grimmer. In October 1991 reports leaked out that the Federal Bureau of Investigation was "widening the net to examine the possibility that the American names were the victims of fraud

Lord Wakeham left syndicate 833 in1988 — just in time

Roger Knapman

when they were signed up by Lloyd's agents" (*The Times*, 3 October 1991). The senate investigations sub-committee was digging even deeper.

Nothing could have done more damage to Lloyd's than a mass of lawsuits following such investigations. The recruitment without strings, with immunity from prosecution and unlimited liability, of thousands of rich Americans had been crucial to Lloyd's development and survival. But as many of those new investors faced ruin, Lloyd's chiefs observed with horror that prominent US politicians were clamouring for results from the SEC investigation.

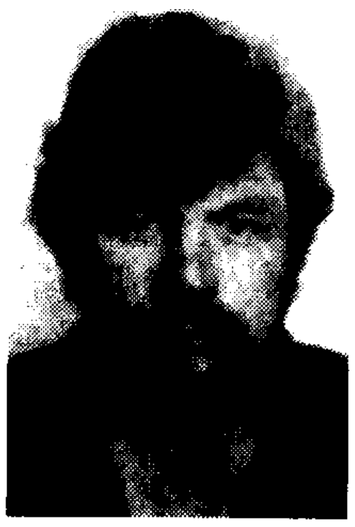
As early as December 1991, for instance, Senator John Dingell, chairman of the House energy and commerce committee, wrote to the head of the SEC, Richard Breeden, demanding answers to questions about the progress of the inquiry. By the time Major got to Washington, there was something approaching panic in the high Tory circles at the top of Lloyd's.

Carefully briefed about all these matters, Major argued with Bush that British law (which has already decided that the Council of Lloyd's owes no duty of care to its investors) should prevail in all such cases, and that American law should not be invoked. Bush agreed at once. Almost without anyone noticing, the investigations were summarily stopped.

Major had struck a great blow for his party. No one knows better than he how much his government and his majority depends on Lloyd's staying in business, safe behind its pervasive legal immunities.

The pending penury of so many Tory MPs who are "names" at Lloyd's is constantly being mourned in the newspapers, but it is only fair to remember that not all of them have suffered. Some have shown great shrewdness in extricating themselves from unlucky syndicates in the nick of time.

The record of Roger Knapman, farmer/surveyor MP for Stroud, is outstanding. In 1986, the year before he entered parliament, he came off the notorious Fagan syndicate (540) which declared some £600 million losses in the following four years. In 1987, Mr Knapman came off the Gooda Walker syndicates (298 and 164), and Hazell (190), both of which declared huge losses the following year.



Greased Palmer

THE *News of the World*'s man in Birmingham, Steve Valentine, has refused to give the *Eye* the address or telephone number of Mick Palmer, a former policeman who gave Valentine a scoop for his paper on 20 June.

Palmer told Valentine — and even swore an affidavit to the same effect — that Jimmy Robinson, one of the three men convicted of the murder of newspaper boy Carl Bridgewater, had confessed to him 15 years ago in a police cell in Bromsgrove.

Valentine seemed strangely unworried by a curious cut in his copy for the paper's large-selling edition in London and the south-east. The Midlands edition had included this vital information: "Mr Palmer requested a small fee for his interview with us. The *News of the World* decided that it was worth acceding to his wishes for the sake of advancing public debate."

This new experiment in chequebook journalism could in normal circumstances be dismissed as typical *News of the World* drivel. From the moment he was arrested in December 1978, despite ruthless interrogation, Jimmy Robinson (who admitted other robberies and even led police to his gun) said he had nothing to do with the murder of the newspaper boy.

West Mercia police say the custody records of the time are all destroyed, so they cannot confirm whether Palmer was ever in contact with Robinson during his short spells on remand at Bromsgrove. But Palmer's story that he played cards and chatted alone for hours with a Category A prisoner suspected of one of the worst murders in the area for years is absurd.

It was strongly supported, however, by two Tory MPs, John Blackburn (Dudley) and Warren Hawksley (Halesowen and Stourbridge). Mr Blackburn, who was for 12 years a detective in the Liverpool police, described Palmer's statement as "pure 24 carat gold". This is not believed to be reference to the "small fee" paid for the story.

Mr Blackburn produces (according to the *News of the World*) "a letter from a woman of 28 who says she passed Yew Tree Farm, the day Carl was murdered" and who says "she recognised the car belonging to the gang outside the farm and Robinson standing by it".

This woman is not a new witness. She is Wendy Stagg, a teacher, who gave evidence at the 1979 trial. She saw a blue car outside Yew Tree Farm at 4.45pm on the afternoon of the murder. The murder was at 4.20, and the murderer had almost certainly left the scene at least 15 minutes before Miss Stagg saw the car. No car fitting her description was ever found which belonged to Robinson or any of the other convicted men.

Miss Stagg failed to pick anyone out from an identity parade on which Robinson stood. Only after the parade did she say that Robinson looked like the man she saw. That man, she told the trial, had a "reasonable amount" of hair, which she described in detail ("dark with sunlight gleaming off it in which case it would have been grey".) At the time Robinson had no hair at all. It had been shaved to the scalp.

Mr Hawksley chimed in with the hope that the people campaigning for a new appeal into the case "will now concede their case doesn't stand up". He did not reveal that he is former member of the West Mercia police authority.

Since Mr Palmer has not responded to our efforts to contact him, the *Eye* would be glad of any information about him, his job (described in the *News of the World* as a "heavy goods vehicle fitter") or why he left West Mercia police in 1980.

New murder evidence
The confession said to have swayed the jury in Carl Bridgewater case was beaten out of one of the four men jailed for the murder, according to new evidence. Page 4

Police to test batons
Trials of new police batons are to start in London within three weeks. Page 5

Guardian 17th June 1993

Dentally unbalanced

THERE HAS been a happy ending to the amazing case of the man who was twice convicted – by a London stipendiary magistrate and a judge – of biting a policeman with someone else's teeth.

Alastair Mitchell was arrested more than three years ago at a London poll tax demonstration. He was convicted of assault at Marlborough magistrates' court and was sent down for 44 days. He appealed to Southwark crown court and judge Anwyl-Davies, jocularly known as "Animal" Davies.The charge against Mr Mitchell was that he had bitten PC Geoffrey Judd on the hand. The bite had been photographed, and Mitchell's teeth pattern sent for tests. Two top dental experts explained carefully to the judge that the bite could not possibly have been inflicted by Mr Mitchell's teeth. Even the prosecution expert could not be sure.

The judge was not impressed. In an historic judgement he declared: "I am not deceived by the experts." Mitchell was sent down, but after six days in stinking Wandsworth he was bailed pending a further appeal to the Divisional Court.

The case came up there on 24 June before Messrs Justice Kennedy and Buckley. Mitchell's argument was that Judge Anwyl-Davies's verdict was not safe because, for example

a) the judge had been reading a book during the hearing

b) the judge had not consulted magistrates, as he should have done.

The judges agreed. They were inclined to order a retrial. This became awkward when it emerged that a main police witness in the case is on extended sick leave, and that the Crown Prosecution service has lost the case files

The judges threw up their hands and quashed the conviction.

NOTTS UNRAVELLING. . .

THE department of health tells the *Eye* that the Nottingham Health Clinic, exposed in the last issue, was judged to be illegal almost from the moment it was set up.

Nonetheless, the Nottingham health authority (chairman, Tory grandee and Major knight Sir David White) unlawfully spent £1.8 million of NHS money on it in three years.

The clinic was set up in 1990 by Bob Beckett, a property king and former alcoholic, and a friend of Jim Lester, the Tory MP for Broxtowe. The two men persuaded the health authority to pay for half the clinic without having any control over it.

In a remarkable statement to the Eye, the department of health revealed: "We were informed after the contract was agreed in 1990, and we told the health authority that they had gone beyond their powers and what they had done was illegal. They then started negotiations to extract themselves from the position they'd got themselves into. Ministers we understand were not informed."

Curious. For three years after that the health authority sloshed money into the clinic. Only now is it trying to sell its stake in it.

Curiouser. The ministers who weren't informed included Notts MP Kenneth Clarke, then health secretary, and the then minister of state Baroness Hooper, close friend of the clinic's first chairman, Lord Mancroft.

Bob Beckett says he doesn't think the partnership was illegal at all. He says the partnership was very much in line with government policy. He says Lord Mancroft got a letter from Margaret Thatcher praising the project early in 1990. That's weeks before the department of health in Thatcher's government declared the partnership illegal.

Mr Beckett says he and his company are paid £50,000 a year by the Priory Hospital Group, one of the biggest private hospital operators in Britain and part of the huge American private health combine, CPC. But he insists his role with Priory is entirely separate to his work at the Nottingham Clinic.

THE THINGS THEY SAY

"IF WE WERE going to cut public expenditure, we would have done it before and I don't believe it is economically right. I have said that in the past, and there is no need to do it whatsoever. So you can rule out any prospect of that."

John Major, general election rally, 30 March 1992.

CYPRUS AVENUE

ON 7 JUNE a lot of MPs asked questions in the House of Commons about Cyprus. When asking their questions, MPs don't have to declare their interests, so the *Eye* is happy to do it for them.

The MPs included Peter Fry (Wellingborough; two questions), who went to Northern Cyprus on a freebie with other MPs in September last year; John D Taylor (UU, Strangford; two questions), who has two cottages in Northern Cyprus (see Letters); and Richard Alexander (Newark), who went to Cyprus on a freebie with other MPs last September.

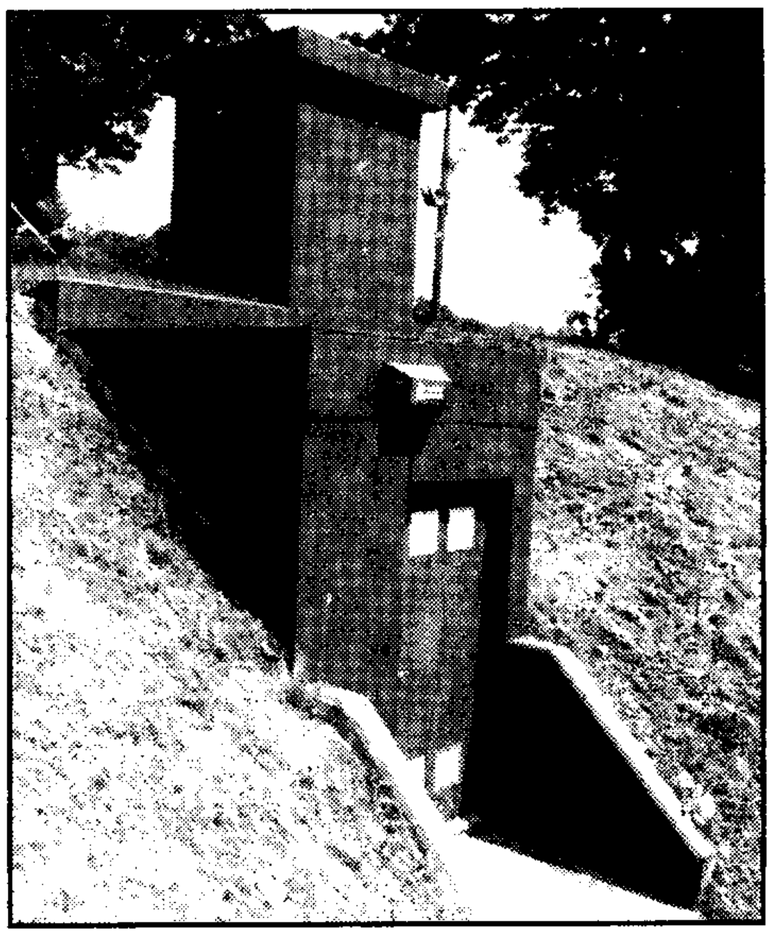
The Ulster Unionist interest in Northern Cyprus seems intense. Two other questioners (who declare no interests in Northern Cyprus) were Mr Roy Beggs (East Antrim) and Mr Ken Maginnis (Fermanagh and South Tyrone).

Bunker Bill

■TREMENDOUS rejoicing throughout Sussex greeted the news that the directors of Southern Water will be safe in the event of nuclear war.

The news was broken after a highly successful freebie at Brede, East Sussex, when Rye MP (and anxious member of Lloyd's) Jacqui Lait opened a new water treatment plant there.

The joyous occasion, in which chairman William Courtney toasted the MP in sparkling water, was marred by the looming presence of a nuclear bunker, recently built at enormous expense by Greenwood Construction of Bexhill. The bunker has a computer room, a complete self-contained electricity and telephone system, a kitchen-dining room, beautifully equipped, and enough sleeping space for 15 to 20 people — the entire Southern Water board, in other words — and of course a huge supply of uncontaminated water.



Sparkling: Courtney and Lait

This sort of protection is afforded to water executives so water supplies can be safely administered after a nuclear war – though how this is possible when all the water will be poisoned by radiation has not been made clear.

Southern Water is rather embarrassed. A spokesman says: "The government over the years has continued to look at the provision of this sort of facility and it just so happens that one of those facilities is at Brede. We built it in response to having an appropriate facility as it was visualised in the early to late 1980s, and of course, as the cold war has rather warmed up a bit, the approach might be rather different."

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Quote of the week:

"There are a few laughs in the book. For instance, Mme Charles de Gaulle being asked by Lady Dorothy Macmillan what she wanted for the future, and her replying: 'A penis'. This caused general consternation until de Gaulle leaned over and explained: 'In English, it is pronounced happiness.' "

Lynn Barber reviewing Kenneth Williams's Diaries, *Independent on Sunday*

CAZ — DATE: please?

GREETINGS FROM the margins (as defined, and dismissed, by Hurd in Bucharest, 2/6/93). CT.

CARL MCMILLAN cartoonist. We need your address if you want your cheque and annual sub for the Ascot Competition.

ANON. FINE pencil drawing of "La Bollard" submitted without name and address. Please contact the Eye.

SHOCK ANNOUNCEMENT! Karl Alfred Haag von Stuttgart — the most handsome man in the world — is 40, 30th June 1993.

GGWWF.

SPEECHWRITING — see MITCH MURRAY, Eye Help.

ROBERTO DeNILO: 2021 — 21.12.88, 23.09.89, (17.12.92). Lots o'harz, "Bunjie".

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NADIR WEAR: "Come To Cyprus See Your Mates" T-shirts £7.99, sweatshirts £15.50 (S/M/L/XL), Mates watch "Don't let the buggers get you down" £8.99 inc. P&P and VAT (UK). Cheques: FINDIX, Huccaby House, Bacup, OL13 9HP. 0706 875004.

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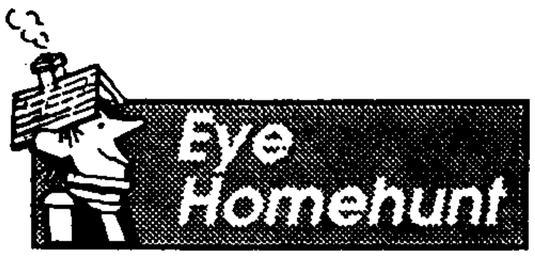

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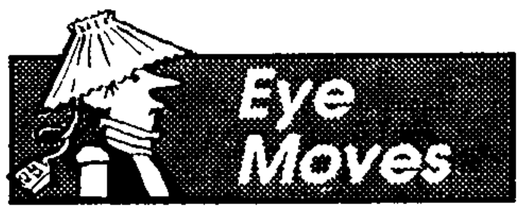

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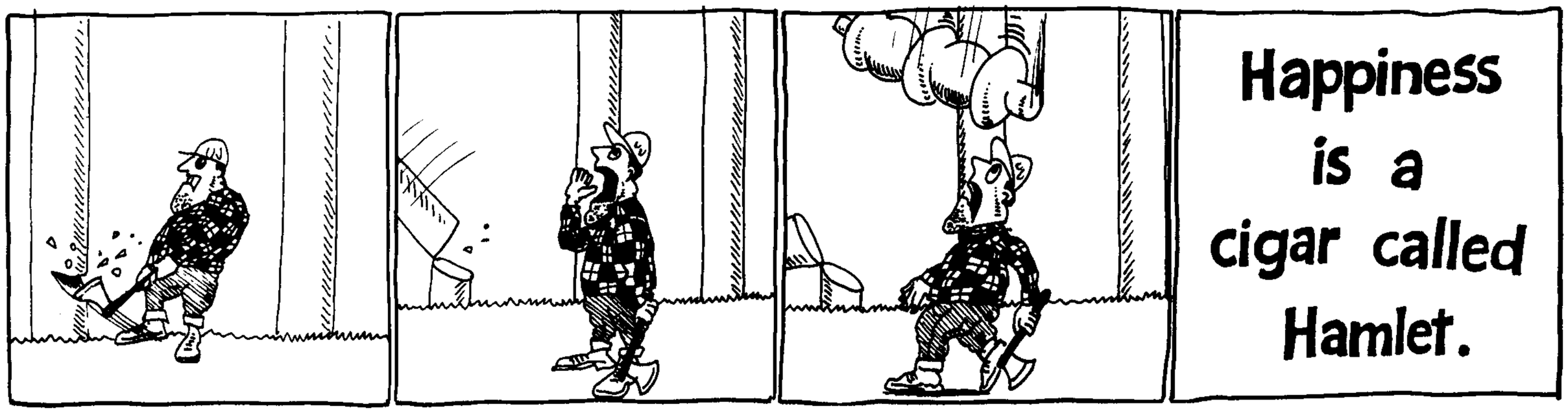

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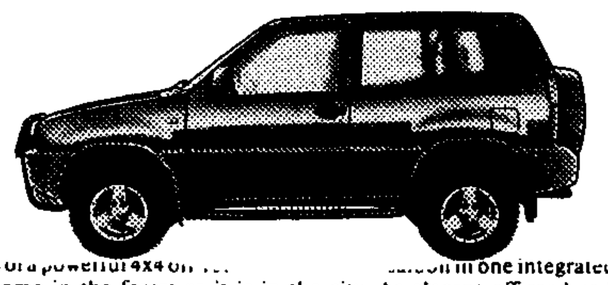

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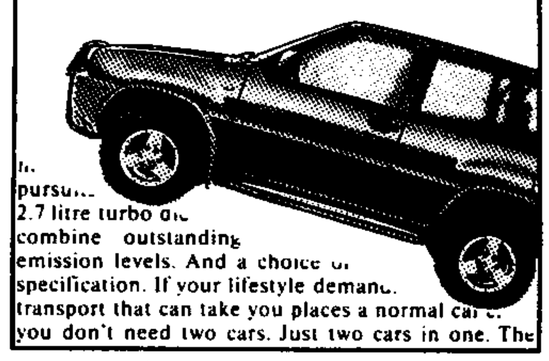

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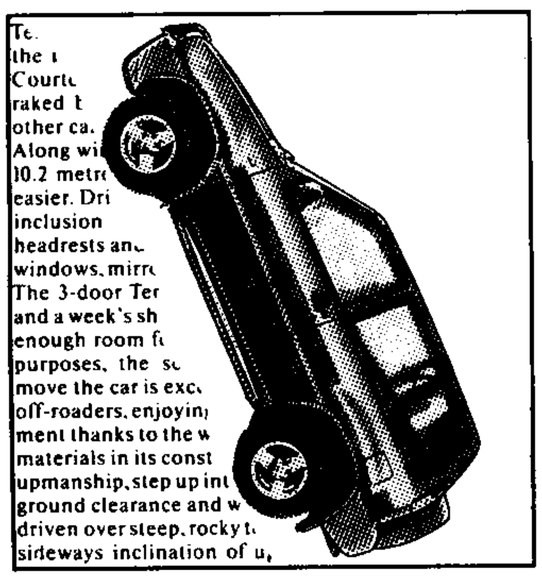
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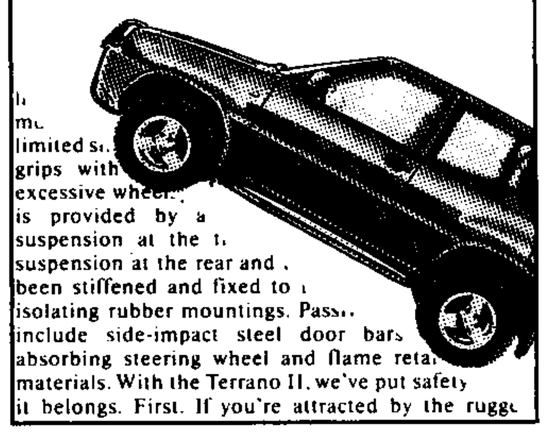
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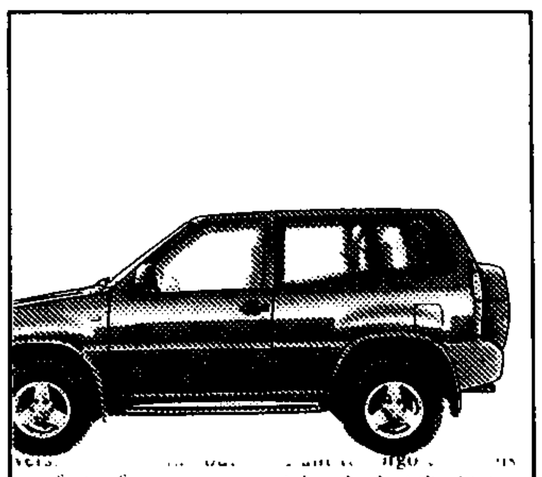
TALL DARK ATHLETIC professional male, 40s, seeks uninhibited sensual woman to visit for erotic but considerate relationship. Discretion assured. Photograph please. North East but can travel. Box 5323.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MALE, 30, TALL, slim, graduate, company director, seeks Catherine Zeta Jones or attractive slim sensuous lady 20-30 for cuddles, fun, excitement and fulfilling relationship. Photo ensures reply. London or South East. Box 5423.

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ATTRACTIVE ATTACHED 45 year old Glasgow based business man seeks lady for a discreet intimate relationship. Box 5923.

ATTRACTIVE PROFESSIONAL brunette, late 20s, seeks tall male with GSoH to share lazy summer evenings in London. Photo appreciated. Box 6023.

ROMANTIC, EMOTIONALLY battered professional male, 50s, seeks 45+ n/s lady with great SoH for permanent repairs. Box 6123.

LONDON MALE, 27, attractive, intelligent, seeks Christian female for friendship, sports and culture. Box 6223.

IDEALISTIC FEMALE, attractive 23, seeks intelligent funny sincere male friend. S.Wales/anywhere. Box 6323.

KIND PROFESSIONAL, divorced, GSoH, n/s, 50s, seeks 30/50 lady for caravan hols this summer. View permanent hookup. Box 6423.

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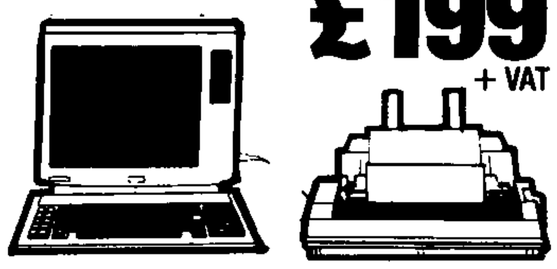

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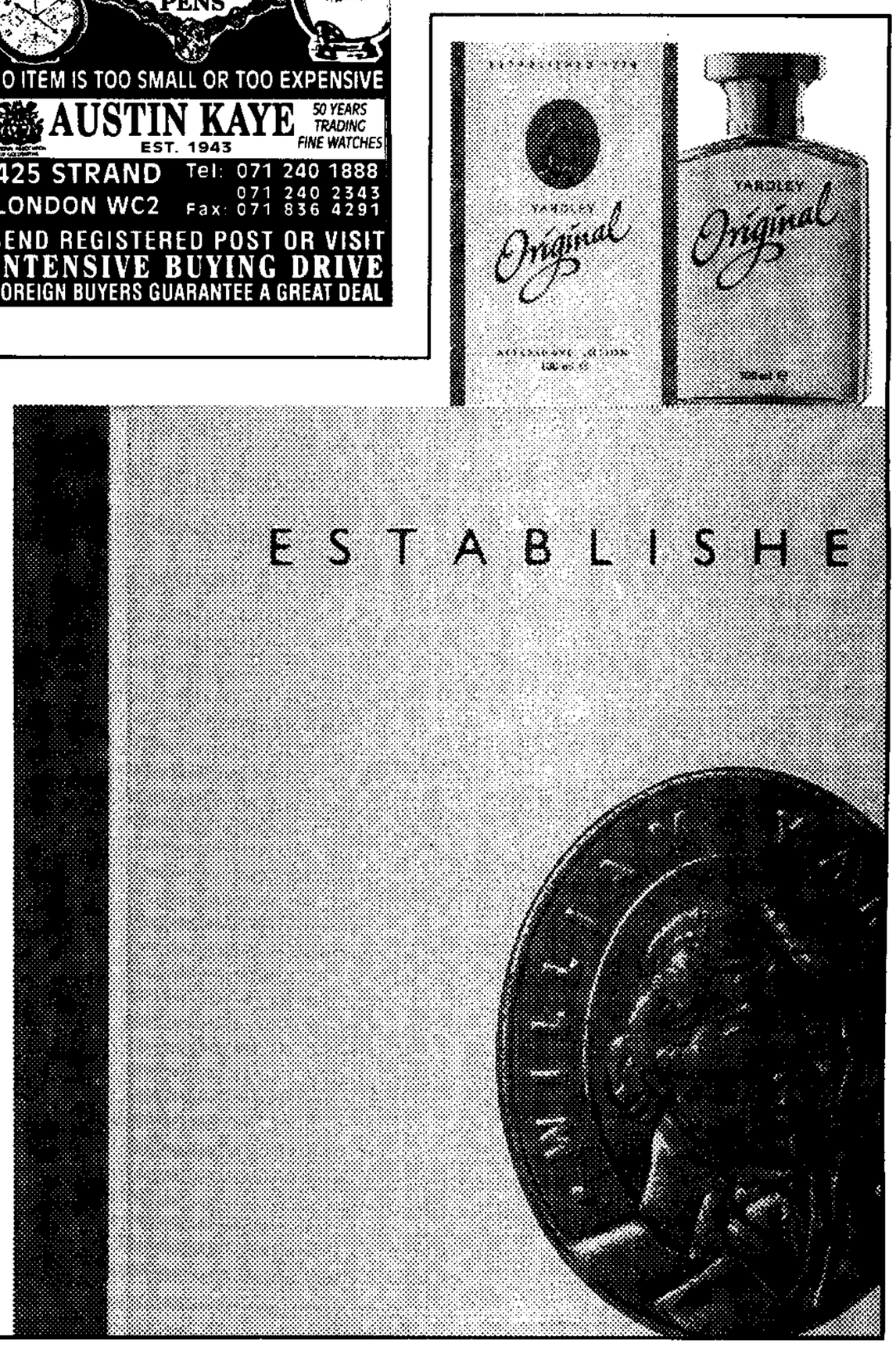

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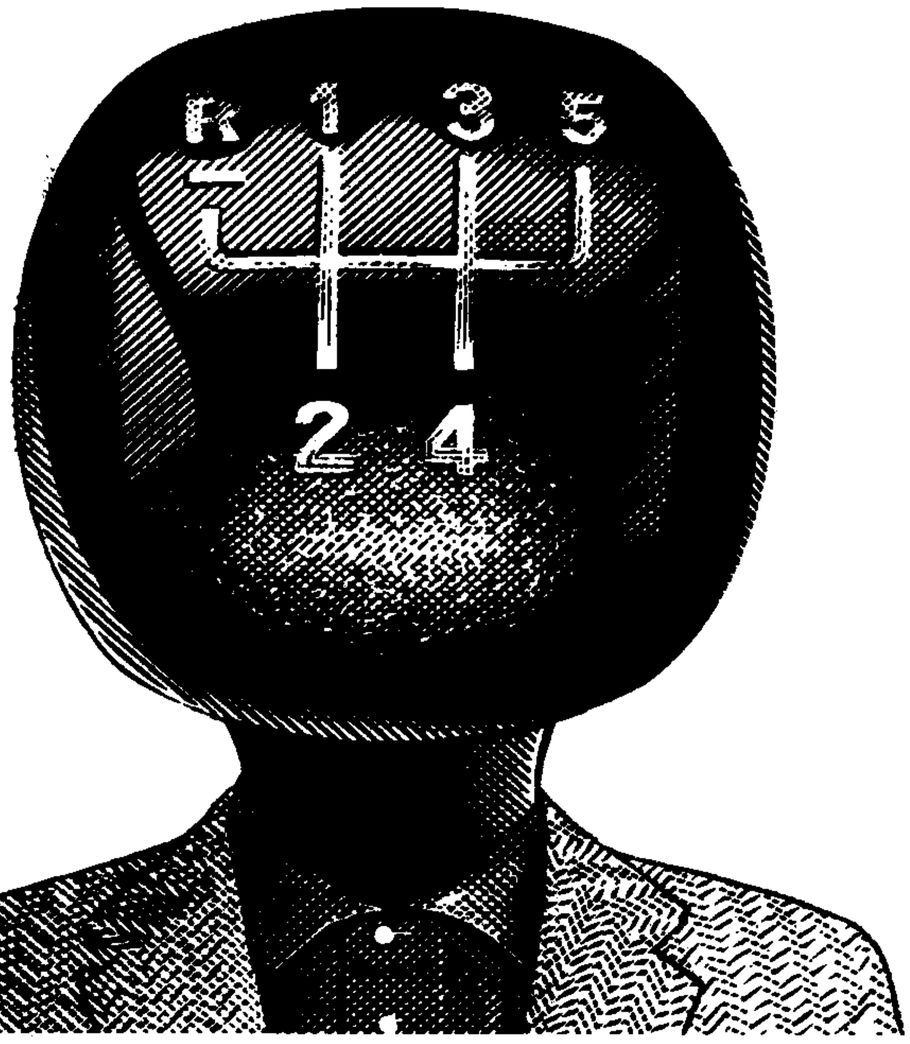

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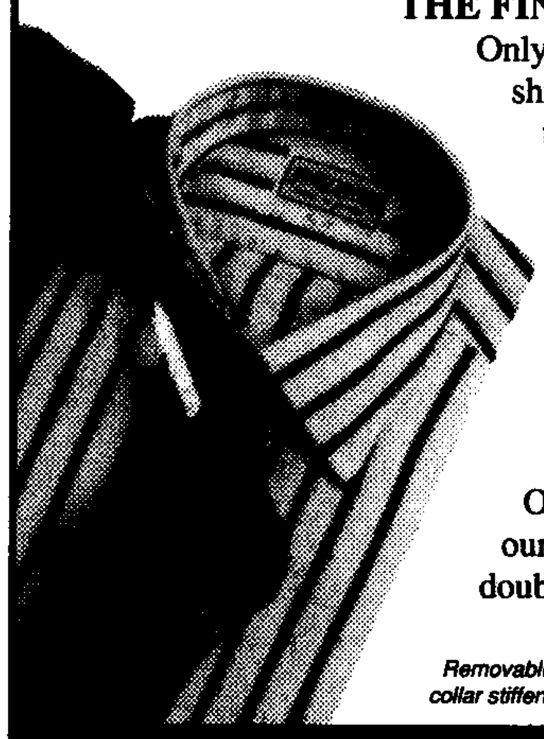

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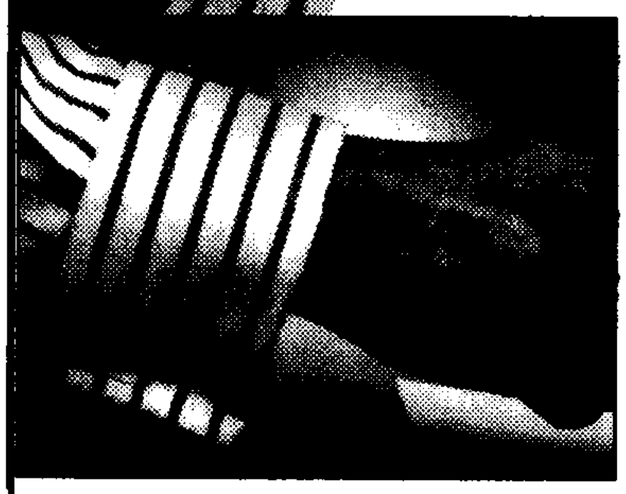

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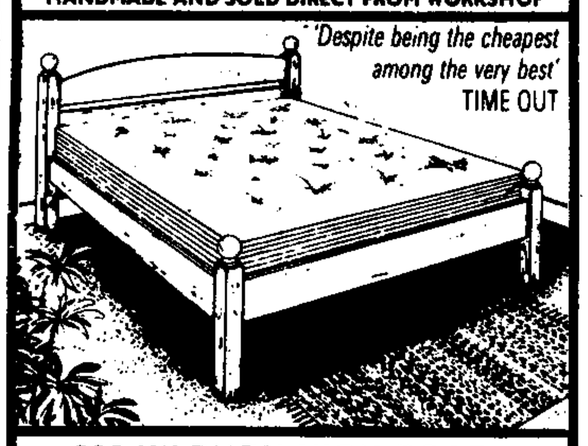

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